

# A NON-AUTHORITARIAN APPROACH TO SECONDARY SCHOOL PEDAGOGY: A CRITICAL ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

By

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## **Abstract**

This thesis critiques authoritarian school policies and the pedagogic industry that over-authoritarianism has spawned to manage pupil behaviour. The overarching paradigm has been behavioural, centred on rewards and punishments. As a secondary school teacher I was deemed to be highly effective as an educator and disciplinarian by all objective measures, a no-nonsense, assertive persona championing authoritarian authority. I became disillusioned with this pedagogy of coercion and reached a point of professional 'living contradiction'. I realised for the first time that the authoritarian teacher might actually be part of the problem, not the solution to poor discipline. I wished to develop a pedagogy in tune with my espoused values, developing positive teacher-pupil relationships which, I felt, might encourage both motivation in schoolwork and the development of pupils' self-control and self-discipline. This thesis is an account of my intellectual and pedagogical journey to replace my authoritarian pedagogy with a way of teaching and learning based (in both directions) on respect, manners and friendly school relationships which is co-constructivist, encouraging pupils to be deeply involved in their own learning. I evidence the effect of this on classroom behaviour. I defend my relational pedagogical approach through a review of research literature alongside a three year action research with sixteen of my own classes, interrogating my performance to ask 'Can non-authoritarian teachers contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils?' The reconnaissance stage locates this question in the context of my own educational history, the auto-biographical reflection validated through critical friends. The data collection phase used a range of instruments and reflective processes exploring how I wrestled with pedagogical issues when adopting a non-authoritarian approach, how I learned to be authoritative rather than authoritarian, and how I learned to deal with uncooperative pupils in new ways. In order to extend my new approach more broadly in the school, I worked with six volunteer colleagues, both experienced and newly qualified and I evaluate short and long term effects. I conclude by showing that effective pedagogy comes from positive teacher-pupil relationships

which provide an effective solution to most low-level pupil indiscipline by establishing a culture and climate of cooperation and co-construction of learning.



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And of course my love and gratitude goes to my wife, Julia, who has been my anchor throughout. And finally to our beautiful children, Emma, Libby and Chad for the many sacrifices they have accepted during this prolonged period.

*Kids, you may sing again, for Daddy has finally finished his work!*

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## Abbreviations

<b>AD</b>	Assertive Discipline
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
<b>AR</b>	Action Research
<b>AS</b>	Around School
<b>AST</b>	Advance Skills Teacher
<b>B &amp; A</b>	Behaviour & Attendance
<b>BESD</b>	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
<b>BS</b>	Blue Sky (Behaviour)
<b>C</b>	Control
<b>C1 / 2 / 3</b>	Consequences
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education
<b>FF</b>	Functional Fluency
<b>FTT</b>	Female Trainee Teacher
<b>GC</b>	Grey Cloud (Behaviour)
<b>HCEC</b>	House of Commons Education Committee
<b>HLTA</b>	Higher Level Reaching Assistant
<b>ICO</b>	Inclusion Control Openness
<b>IU</b>	Internal Isolation Unit
<b>IO</b>	Isolation Officer
<b>M / F</b>	Male / Female
<b>MTT</b>	Male Trainee Teacher
<b>N</b>	Never (previously misbehaved with me)
<b>NG</b>	New Girl
<b>NQT</b>	Newly Qualified Teacher
<b>PAC</b>	Parent Adult Child
<b>PCI</b>	Pupil Control Ideology
<b>RBA</b>	Relationship Bank Account
<b>RC</b>	Rain Cloud (Behaviour)
<b>RE</b>	Religious Education
<b>S1 / 2 / 3</b>	Sanctions
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs
<b>SG</b>	Smiling Girl
<b>SS</b>	Sunshine Behaviour
<b>SW</b>	Sean Warren
<b>TA</b>	Transactional Analysis
<b>TIFF</b>	Temple Index for Functional Fluency
<b>WC</b>	White Cloud (Behaviour)
<b>WS</b>	Whole School

## **Preface**

This preface has been added after the viva at the request of the examiners, to add clarity about my project for new readers.

This thesis is the story of my journey as a secondary school teacher when I stopped thinking of myself as authoritarian ‘boss’ (a persona I used to be proud of) so that I could relate more positively to the pupils. Just as I, a parent, want my own children to have a happy schooling, so as teacher it has become my dominant aspiration for all children in my classes to enjoy learning in school.

My research encouraged an about-turn in my pedagogical approach. I started as a teacher who knew how to control my classes and wanted to pass this skill on to younger teachers. ‘Control’ meant that my will always dominated. Some searching early supervision discussions set me thinking that the pupils’ voices and will were also important, and if a dynamic could be struck where the wills of the teacher and the pupils are in harmony, opportunities for learning and enjoyment could be much greater. This is a critical account of my shift from one persona to another. My different understanding of the nature of control may give the reader the impression that previously I was a tyrant. This was not so; previously I had good relationships with pupils for more than two decades, and have enjoyed many friendly conversations with former pupils. I was regarded by school and OFSTED as an outstanding teacher and established a career out of my friendly but authoritarian mix of class management. In my view the role of the pupil was to obey, not to be in any sense a free agent. Pupils who challenged authority would be confronted, leading to a less positive relationship with me than compliant pupils would experience. Career promotions were the result of my experience in managing these confrontations and I became responsible for whole school behaviour strategies.

However, as national pressures for authoritarianism in school behaviour policy sharpened, I became uncomfortable that the balance had shifted. Popular teacher guides described young people disrespectfully as “buggers” (for example, ‘getting the buggers to behave’), and exclusion policies left many vulnerable adolescents without a

proper education. This study is an attempt to articulate my disquiet and search for a different way forward. Conroy & de Ruyter (2008: p.5) provide an historical parallel to illuminate my gradual shift in regards to discipline:

“During the 1960s and early 1970s in Britain corporal punishment was regarded as a *sine qua non* of effective educational practice. This would have been the mainstream or centre position. A teacher who rejected both the principle and the practice of corporal punishment would then have occupied a liminal position with respect to the mainstream or centre. During the 1980s there was a sustained challenge to the claimed educational, social and behavioural efficacy of corporal punishment resulting in its eventually being designated as illegal. Consequently, those who once occupied the liminal position of not agreeing with corporal punishment now find themselves at the centre and those who continue to uphold to the value of corporal punishment, once at the centre, now occupy a liminal position”.

My journey might be seen as the next step from this as I moved from the centre of authoritarianism to a liminal position; it had ethical implications. In teacher terms, becoming an anything-goes teacher with ‘out of control’ classes was not an option. Children are required to attend school but have potential to do so cheerfully and to learn. I discover that being in authority (in loco parentis, responsible for health and safety) need not mean being authoritarian. My changed stance of respecting pupils’ opinions was an ethical choice. As this had happened as a consequence of my PhD research, permissions were sought and obtained both through the school’s ethics policy (via the Head-teacher) and in negotiation with classes and individual pupils. The children had to be in my class, as these were their normal lessons and I was their teacher; but I always left it open whether they completed items used primarily for my research such as the end of module evaluations. They had the option of doing other useful tasks. The evaluations were always planned as educational activities, to round off a section of learning. There these would be used for my research, this was always made explicit.

I also need to be up-front about power relationships between pupils and teacher. I recognize that this potentially raises issues for any teacher-researchers engaged on action research with their own classes. It is however important to say that my attitudes to power in school had fundamentally changed. The first thing to say is that almost without exception this was a two year period of teaching when I did not shout or unduly raise my voice, and did not resort to sarcasm, but preferred to find respectful non-conflictual solutions to behavioural issues. This was new for me, and also for the pupils. I thought of my research as 'researching us' (the whole class, teacher and pupils) and not me (the researcher) researching 'them' (the pupils). I always represented the research to pupils in these terms.

This research contains auto-biographical reflexivity. I discovered many ghosts that needed to be laid to rest from bullying incidents I endured and from my own difficult schooling in London. I theorise this through literature on reflexivity, emphasising "the living I", focusing on my own life performance through action research and living theory. To engage with external perspectives, I drew on a range of 'lenses' (Brookfield 1995, 2008) to challenge me to critically examine my assumptions and "to make the familiar strange", to use an old adage. There is with autobiography a danger of self-delusion, so I built in various verification and validation strategies. I had daily on-line conversations with my supervisor via a private blog which served as my research notebook or diary, a helpful method of reflection not well represented in research literature.

A number of critical friends also validated my research. My wife, an experienced primary teacher read every word and discussed my assertions as a matter of course. A former colleague from my Teacher Training days discussed the research with me by telephone and face to face, and read the completed thesis and fed back chapter by chapter. He was able to verify the accuracy of the characteristic traits portraying my former stance described in my work. He too had become unhappy with the education system and recently left teaching. Unable to articulate his sense of dissatisfaction, his engagement with my documented account enabled him to address the guilt he felt about his inability to fit in with school directives and to simply toe the line. I sense a renewed vigour in his approach as he now seeks a new way to make a contribution to young peoples'

educational experiences. Another, a retired teacher stimulated by our conversations also volunteered to read the entire thesis so to gauge its comprehensibility and evaluate whether my evidence accurately reflected that with which I was attempting. This experienced man recognised his own issues within my work. Susannah Temple, the originator of the key instrument I used for reflexive exploration (TIFF) also became a confidante. Deriving from her own doctoral research, she checked the accuracy of my application before submission.

Other people acted as quasi critical friends. These included a life-long friend who in his role as University lecturer regularly presents many of the themes I advance to engage his students in critical discussion. Significant insights and perspectives also emerged from my running partner – essentially a non-teacher. As a parent who subscribes wholeheartedly to ‘traditional school standards’, his responses called attention to a requirement for my explanations to be grounded in common language so to not be misinterpreted (he assumed I was advocating, in his words, a ‘liberal’ approach which was devoid of boundaries in response to my querying of dominating control).

It cannot be emphasised enough that this period of research changed my thinking and has impacted deeply on my professional life as I seek to find a niche for myself outside of the classroom. Whether listening to debate on Radio 4, or scanning the articles in the Times Educational Supplement, I do so with the assurance that I can now see through the ideological mantra which claims validity by prefacing arguments with the often uncontested term ‘evidence based’. I also recognise aspects of myself in the trainee, in the Newly Qualified, as well as in the experienced teachers I meet. I have trodden the same path and have also travelled in the deep rooted and established grooves which came to define and constrain me. As I embark upon the final chapters of my career I do so with the intent on venturing where opportunity and need leads me, to take time to stop to appreciate the view. Although I acknowledge that this thesis positions me as ‘swimming against the ideological tide’ I resolve to live out my values consistently and without compromise.



## **Chapter One: Introduction - Emergence of the research problem:**

### **1.1: Scope of the explicit concern**

Pupil resistance to authority is not new (Hayden 2011). An Ipsos Mori survey (2003) concluded that three in ten teachers recognised poor pupil behaviour and discipline as the main negative aspect of their role. Sixty per cent of teachers asked, felt that “negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession” (DfE 2012a: p.1). The Professional Association of Teachers (2005) in their submission to Steer Committee (2005: p.34) identified: “Behaviour [as] one of the single most important factors affecting teaching and learning”. Previously Dean (1998) revealed unpublished Ofsted findings which suggested that parents were more concerned with discipline than with academic standards (TES: 11/05/08). An Ipsos Mori poll, commissioned by Crabtree (2009), concluded that parents placed good discipline as the most important feature they wanted in schools. In addition, a study involving 60,000 pupils found growing numbers were also becoming increasingly disillusioned by peer disruption (Johnson 2001). Prior to these concerns, the Elton Report (1989) had stated they could provide no definitive answer to the question of whether things were getting worse. Since then Elliott claimed that Britain has the “Worst Pupils in the World” (TES: 16/01/04). Reid (2010) provided comprehensive coverage of government and wider research on behaviour in the UK over the last decade. Ofsted (2013) stated disruption and inattention in schools have been accepted for far too long: estimating around 700,000 pupils attended schools where behaviour needs to improve, a need for change was stipulated so to avert a decline in educational standards. Recently Hayden (2014) argued the true extent of poor pupil behaviour in schools, as depicted in ‘official’ reports, is seriously underestimated. In 2011 the House of Commons Education Committee (HCEC 2011: p.3) were still unable to offer “any evidence-based or objective judgment on either the state of behaviour in schools today or whether there has been an improvement over time”.

Unease about classroom behaviour is not confined to the UK. A review of sixteen studies from six countries indicated widespread concern amongst teachers (Beaman et al. 2007). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2009) surveyed staff in 23

countries – not including the UK – and concluded that one in four teachers across participating countries reported at least 30% of teaching time was lost due to disruptive student behaviour. The scale of the issue and how to effectively respond to it justifies the potential significance of this research.

This thesis describes an action research programme carried out with pupils in my classes in an English rural comprehensive school on the England-Wales border. It began as a study of the effects of disruptive behaviour but evolved into a study of positive teacher-pupil interactions, asking whether this is helpful in building a more cooperative and less disruptive classroom atmosphere. My view of effectiveness, as an authoritarian, equated to my ability to ensure order through eliciting pupils' compliance. Whilst I sought to change my own approach I was curious to see if, firstly, order could be maintained. If so, I wished to question specifically the nature of order - whether pupils' cooperative self-control might begin to replace the stifled conformity I tended to observe in response to my dominance as an authoritarian teacher<sup>1</sup>. Therefore my research question became:

***Can non-authoritarian teachers contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils?***

Since my action research is rooted in a desire to change the power dynamic in school, I relate my thoughts to Critical Theory and describe my methodology as 'critical action research'. This will be further explored below.

## **1.2: Context**

When I started this study in September 2008, my broad area of interest was tension in my school, in which I had worked for eight years. I was particularly concerned with the strain pupils' 'disruptive behaviour' had on fellow staff and ensuing classroom relationships. I intended to scrutinise what I perceived as my own successful class control. I set out to probe

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<sup>1</sup> I use the terms compliance and conformity to denote pupils' adherence to school and class expectations around order. Both expressions indicate degrees of social influence. I consider the former to be in response to a request or demand from another person, whilst the latter is associated with subscribing to a group norm. I apply these definitions to pupils' interactions with teachers and peers within the class dynamic.

whether, or to what extent, what I 'did' or 'had' could be transferred to others. I had progressively come to utilise a combination of authoritarian tips, techniques, strategies, tricks of the trade and habits, to complement personality, status and reputation to ensure order. I had constructed my own personal theory, shaped by experience. Young (1992) coined this approach 'technical eclecticism' where one has a tendency to utilise one organising theory and borrow supplementary methods from other theories.

Despite acknowledging the merits of Rogers' (2002) 'Positive Behaviour Leadership' model (PBL), which advocates shared rights and responsibilities for both students and staff, my practice was dominated by adherence to behaviourist theories (Skinner 1972) via 'Assertive Discipline' (Canter 1988), the fashionable behaviour strategy. At this point I did not question the philosophical roots of the behaviour theories I so diligently practised. I considered myself to be a 'natural', as I saw myself controlling others' behaviour in a way I deemed as effective. Therefore my early question was 'Are effective teachers born or made?'

However, as I explored the term 'effective', I began to realise that my professional identity had been sub-consciously cultivated in accordance to institutional norms. This discovery, in my third decade working with children, would take on unanticipated relevance as the study unfolded to incorporate perspectives from 'Critical Theory'. Marx's concept of alienation resonates: I certainly had been working in ways which estranged me from who I really was (Brookfield 2008) or at least what I would aspire to be. I had never anticipated that I would be found to be part of the problem that I proposed to study.

In summary, I had been operating as an authoritarian teacher with duties involving control and discipline across the school and was regarded as highly effective by the school and by Ofsted. The establishment of clear sanctions, a robust detention system and isolation unit were operational mechanisms which I, in my strategic role, had introduced into school, deriving from a philosophy of 'zero tolerance'. The term 'zero tolerance' is self-explanatory but controversial: it is critiqued in the literature review. The structures sought to simplify and unify systematic responses for behaviours deemed by the teacher to be disruptive. The tenets infiltrated my general persona and were acutely apparent in critical moments when individuals tested my

authority. Pupil conduct prompting reaction ranged from resistance to challenge; and could be passive or active in its manifestation.

Understanding young people's behaviour in schools is not straightforward (Hayden 2011). As the Steer Report commented (2005: p.7): "issues around behaviour and discipline are complex and wide-ranging". A definitive definition of the phenomenon remains elusive. As Docking (1980: p.42) observed: "labelling behaviour is bedevilled not only by technical problems of assessment but also by problems of value judgements". The terminology used by Neill to survey National Union of Teachers (NUT) members changed from 'unacceptable behaviour' in 2001, to 'disruptive behaviour' in 2008 (Hayden 2011). Steer (2009) also referred to 'bad' behaviour and 'disobedience'. The broad term 'challenging behaviour' is readily associated with pupils categorized with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD). Visser (2003) identified a wide and evolving set of classifications which define and label this significant cohort. The general phrase 'misbehaviour' is open to a broad range of discrepant interpretations and can be subject to oversensitivity (Miller 2003; Roffey & O'Reirdan 2001). Usually attributed to interrupting the teaching and learning process (Merrett & Wheldall 1986; Lawrence et al. 1983; Doyle 1990), I had come to interpret disruption to be a personal affront to the teacher which could not be accepted or ignored. In a school situation, I was beginning to appreciate that adult behaviour is as complex as child behaviour. Undefined internal tendencies may incline teachers to revert to behaving in authoritarian ways towards pupils, despite personal beliefs in more democratic forms of discipline (Lewis 1997).

### **1.3: Addressing limitations of previous study**

In 2006, through a Master's degree, I had alluded to concerns and obstacles which impeded my task of addressing whole school behaviour issues. Yet, despite drawing attention to the strain political decisions were placing on school relationships, and advocating an emphasis on inter-personal needs, in reality the ideas remained dormant as I continued to carry out my duties unabated. Even as I instigated the re-establishment of a House system to foster a sense of belonging, my operational practice centred on installing and maintaining rigorous and strategic approaches to deter pupils' obstructive behaviour towards institutional authority figures. This

was predominately through discipline procedures for all pupils whilst habitual offenders were also subject to intervention strategies. Scrutiny of the focus period between 2004 and 2008 is documented below in Chapter Four. Most significantly, my Master's dissertation failed to fully appreciate the subliminal effect the enactment of role had on my psyche or indeed that I was integral to the concerns I had raised in my dissertation. This thesis addresses the neglected issue as its potential significance quickly became apparent as I began this study. The resulting exploration of the state, highlighted below, caused a philosophical amendment to the original proposal.

#### **1.4: Ontology**

This thesis includes an ontology, locating the study within my own educational and professional journey. This clarifies how my assumptions were influenced and formed, interrogated through reflection, and ultimately changed. An ontology, literally 'study of being', is a discussion of how we view the world and how we construct knowledge. It allows me to interrogate my own story, to explore reasons why I think as I do; to use past experiences in order to meet the present and future (Anderson et al. 1990). It is thus more than an autobiographical story, defined by Ellis (2004) as an account which is written and recorded by the individuals who are the subject of the study. I am interested to probe the origins of my contemporary conception of what it means to be a 'good' teacher. In this respect, my understanding of what constitutes reality has changed over time, for reasons I will explore. My reflection on personal experiences and understandings can be found in single or multiple episodes (Denzin 1989). Narrative identity is a constantly evolving story (Syrjälä & Estola 1999). Such approaches need to ensure the standards of analysis for the use of narrative is as strenuous as they are for biography (Miller 2000), of which autobiography is a form (Kridel 1998). Research on one's own practice has to satisfy the normal rules of reliability and validity as Bullough & Pinnegar (2001: p.17) pointed out: "authentic voice is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the scholarly standing of a biographical self-study".

As I interrogate aspects from "the useable past" (Mitchell & Weber 1998: p.46), I do so with the understanding that it merely represents my biased and incomplete version of historical events.

Schon (1991) commented that there are always stories within stories. Accounts are not to be treated as objectively factual (Goodson 2010), since our past (mis)understanding can cause unreliable memories. As I 'turn back' on myself (Davis 1999), Bochner (2007: p.203) cautions in the telling of 'stories', we are gathering "knowledge from the past and not necessarily knowledge about the past". Aware that the ontology is subjective I seek to show how *feelings* become *knowledge* through reflexive thought.

At the beginning of my journey working with children, aged 18, I observed a model that would become my template. It came through a part-time job at a primary school play-centre in east London. The infants and juniors took no notice of me on my first day as I had to be rescued by the woman in charge. I stood back mildly embarrassed as she shouted loudly at them to bring about their complete obedience. I quickly learned techniques, or more so, a way of 'being' that achieved the desired outcomes – order! I got very good at it.

Four years of teacher training affirmed the effectiveness of my approach. I could discipline long before I knew the first thing about teaching and learning. Zeichner & Grant (1981) argued for the significance of biography on the grounds that trainee teachers are not passive recipients of institutional values. Claiming trainees' predispositions toward teaching do play some part in explaining what occurs, they found students who began the training with highly custodial views on pupil control, retained these views at the end of the experience.

Early on in my teaching career, my performance, initially as a Physical Education teacher (PE), started to get noticed. I was described as a 'rough diamond' in my first Ofsted inspection in 1994. In my first post I placed great emphasis on enjoying the company of the children I taught and coached through school sports teams. However, in unison with promotions I gradually became a workaholic. Immersed in the job, I was increasingly mindful of responsibilities which my positions brought, and of an expanding reputation I felt compelled to maintain. Every internal and external observation of my lessons in the eight years preceding this study was judged to be 'outstanding'. This led to invitations to speak at national conferences. Recognition prompted perfectionist tendencies and I began to dominate myself by absorbing unrealistic expectations. Most of my thoughts projected towards future events, left me with minimal

energy to operate with liberty in the present for, I reflect, I was constantly preoccupied with assimilated targets and deadlines. However, rather than causing concern, these traits became redefined and were approved by external criteria as my efforts equated to the top standards.

I suspect my antics and the confidence I exuded in my early career made some pupils wary of me. However, it also enabled good relationships and learning because my students rarely experienced any disruption of any significance. Although I can chart a series of confrontations with individual pupils (and staff) as I established myself in each new post, I was certainly never an ogre or tyrant. I reasoned I just represented clear boundaries for all of the pupils. For some I might even have even made a positive personal impact on their life.

In 1998 Bill Rogers spoke at my school and showed a different, 'better' way to manage pupils' behaviour (his strategies contribute to the approach I advance in Chapter Six). Unfortunately I found over the subsequent years that simple cognitive understanding was not sufficient to alter my path. It seems a number of obscured forces continuously drew me back to an urge to control those who challenged my authority.

My personal story which proceeds and underpins my career is dominated by a deprived background which left me simultaneously dominant over siblings; angry and resistant with target teachers but compliant with others; and vulnerable to intimidation from older boys. Central to this confusing state of affairs is the pervading figure of my dad who left me, the eldest of five children, when I was five years old. I expand briefly on the relevance of these formative experiences below, and in more detail in Chapter Six.

This initial outline of my personal ontology involving the origin of many assumptions provides a foundation for further analysis of my identity as a teacher. Accepting the multiplicities and the complexities of the concept, Zembylas (2003: p.214) argued:

“the construction of teacher identity is at bottom affective, and is dependent upon power and agency, i.e., power is understood as forming the identity and providing the very condition of its trajectory”.

Perhaps most poignantly, I take heed of Illsley-Clarke's (1998) work on developmental stages commonly attributed to age. She names traits which suggest a specific stage, or segment of growing up, might need to be re-visited if it was not appropriately assimilated. She cites issues around identity confusion, signified by the need to define self by job; needing to be in a position of power; feeling driven to achieve; frequently comparing self to others and needing to come off better; wanting or expecting magical solutions or effects – all these chime with my established performance as a teacher. It is pertinent to record these traits are attributed to 'stage 4' categorised as 'Identity and Power' which occurs around ages 3-6, the period my dad left and I was left to inadequately take on the mantle of leader.

### **1.5: Undefined Dissatisfaction**

Throughout my Master's research and for two years afterwards I continued, in the name of professionalism and on behalf of colleagues, to habitually confront pupils' obstinacy. I did so with assertive conviction, though with a growing sense of inner discord which I was beginning to acknowledge, yet was unable to articulate. The stringent disciplinary approach apparent within my classroom seemed to be accepted and affirmed by the vast majority of the recipients and observers. Control was subtly infused within my teaching manner. Through my 'successful' pedagogical practice I had become complicit in suppressing children, insisting on unquestioned compliance when they were given prescribed lesson tasks to complete. These enactments of duty and role were not my explicit intention when embarking upon a vocation working with children, but were increasingly implicit in the positions of responsibility I held as I progressed in my career.

As I probed my sense of unease I had begun to ask whether being overtly controlling might be part of the problem rather than a solution. The status afforded me by the institution I represented determined that I was a teacher in 'control' of pupils; but I began to acknowledge I was also a controlling teacher. For the first time I considered the traits which accompanied this stance to be unethical, and challenged the viewpoint which identified my methods as evidence of unquestioned strength. This current study enables me to formulate my thinking as I convey the undefined sense of disquiet within my psychological state and the process I undertook to



address it. Although I chart a distinct shift from authoritarian to more democratic and emancipatory practice, I explore complex issues which represent the crux of this research.

The disciplinary framework I habitually used formulised personal attributes I had long since acquired, such as the propensity to control others, yet I would argue they were not representative of my aspirations or preferred way of being. It is important, for the sake of clarity and balance, to state that I had positive relationships with the majority of the children I taught throughout my career. I am sure many would attest to fun, affirmation and development – but in retrospect I realise this was always on my terms and derived from an uncontested assertion that I was in control. Any deviation from this established relationship was perceived by me as defiance, provoking impromptu bouts of sarcasm or anger. During the four years I had responsibility for strategic responses to pupils' behaviour, this became increasingly the case. In Chapter Four I continue to examine my performance during this period, which constitutes a primary reconnaissance of this action research: I investigate how I came to embrace an approach which is at odds with my values. That these values derive from my Christian commitment make instances of inaptness even more acute.

I am interested to revisit a reoccurring experience throughout my career which shows mere knowledge of alternative techniques and strategies has not been enough to sustain my principles. The research is personal and sensitive. I seek to probe the idea that there is something much deeper in my nature or life script (Berne 1972) which manifests to resist or even sabotage apparent periods of progress. Through harnessing more democratic relationships and learning experiences, I seek to become more authentic as I reconsider what it means to be a person in a position of social responsibility (Temple 2009a). By 'authentic', I mean that my pedagogy matches with the values I claim to hold. By developing an open and trusting climate that operated in the classroom (Charlton 2007), I envisage that I might increasingly enable pupils to develop self-control which might reduce the need for them to be controlled and disciplined. I seek to scrutinize a tendency to revert to a domineering psyche when performing my institutional role.

In light of these intentions I examine the mental constructs of defensive traits which lay dormant within me, producing habitual behaviours which have come to be of concern. The notion of psychological defence has been defined by Paulus et al. (1997: p.543) as “the process of regulating painful emotions” with ‘defence mechanisms’ depicted as “mental processes that operate unconsciously to reduce some painful emotion”. I align myself with Rhodewalt & Vohs’ (2005: p.550) interpretation which views psychological defence as “efforts to maintain desired self-images, including beliefs about one’s competency in the face of threatening feedback”. Pupils’ indiscipline, perceived as a challenge to my authority, was inexplicitly a threat to the persona I adopted. Alongside the uncritical methodical application of disciplinary measures, such incidents had the capacity to stoke unconscious, automatic and irrational reactions. Rhodewalt & Vohs (2005: p.550) stated a common element of defending the self is the altering of “psychological reality”. I had come to equate my competency as a teacher with conditions defined by order and compliance. Authoritarian approaches such as Canter’s (1988) ‘Assertive Discipline’ affirmed the philosophical assumptions I had come to hold, stating firm teacher control to be an unquestioned right. The reality that authoritarian policies continue to be seen by many as the path to professional effectiveness (DfE 2010a), convinces me of the need for this study in promoting the well-being of the teacher, thus improving the well-being of the pupil.

### **1.6: Central aim**

My action research revolves around a complete *volte face* in my pedagogy, a change of professional strategy from authoritarian to relational. Whereas previously I coped with pupil disruption with an authoritarian, dominating teacher persona, now I attempt to cultivate learning conditions which minimise contestations and build more positive teacher-pupil relationships. I am particularly attentive to how I exercise power (Foucault 1980). This thesis records what happened during this process of change.

I am mindful of Mayes’ (2010) findings which suggest applied critical theories are often too simplistic, assuming that power can be straightforwardly transferred from the ‘powerful’ to the ‘powerless’. Concluding that those approaches which remain theoretical fail to take into

account the importance of micro-level actions, and will not succeed in changing the power relations between teachers and pupils. As such, my work negotiates the creative tension that exists between the requirements of group structure and individual freedom (Chaltain 2009). I present pedagogical strategies which encourage pupils to be active learners; I encourage them to be resilient, to set their own moral boundaries in response to the trust I afford to them as I provide opportunities for greater independence. This climate is presented to partly define my conception of improvement. It can tolerate episodes of apparent disorder alongside the need for stability and boundaries; it places an emphasis on cooperation whilst recognising occasions when compliance is a requirement. I expand on Temple's (2002a) distinction between the two expressions of conformity later in the study.

This action research aims to discover the problems and possibilities of this different approach. Through a review of literature I will argue the prominent discourse, which defines disruption as a moral infringement to be punished, is indicative of the problem to be addressed. As a result I seek to re-conceptualise, or at least broaden, my comprehension of contributory factors influencing pupils' behaviour. I do not anticipate eliminating disturbances to learning, instead I seek to establish a consistent and authentic way to respond to these realities. I wish to discover what sort of classroom dynamic can be achieved, and the extent to which this approach is more in keeping with my values. It will mean employing appropriate authority which minimises distraction from learning and limits damage to relationships, to be authoritative without being authoritarian (Temple 2005). Freire (2005) made a useful distinction between these terms: authoritative means exercising authority that is based on expertise; being authoritarian implies emphasis on power to control (Porter 2006).

### **1.7: Objectives**

Two objectives give context to this central aim. The first is addressed in Chapter Four. It is an examination of my former practice. Primarily, this provides a description of the culture which hosted my research. I consider how I conceive, define and convey my professional identity. I also elaborate on the nature of my relationship with pupils, and offer a preliminary analysis of those whose habitual conduct had a negative effect on learning. The disproportionate impact of

this cohort on the class dynamic and the teacher is a consistent theme through the thesis. I proceed to offer a brief historical autobiographical reflexive account probing the origins of the philosophy I uncritically held. This lays the foundation for interpreting my reactions during critical incidents within the mist of action research. The second objective adds a contemporary perspective to further inform ensuing action research. Analysing field data I seek to better understand situational factors which influence whether my pupils are more or less likely to disrupt learning as they follow their timetable throughout the week.

It is important to point out that whilst my reflexive perspective, and comprehension of pupils' general performance are presented as preliminary chapters, insight gleaned from these aspects emerged gradually whilst engaged in the action research.

### **1.8: Original contribution to knowledge**

My contribution to knowledge is located within the interplay between three variables: the school, the pupils, and the teacher. The first represents a **constant** which places constraints on the research subjects; the second focuses on the notion of pupil **adaption**; the third is encapsulated by the concept of teacher **change**. Each aspect represents a thread for Chapters Four, Five and Six.

The school culture, documented forthwith, provides a clear contextualised framework to comprehend the established nature of power and relationships. My contribution to knowledge critiques the prominence of behaviourism, its emphasis on 'control' and primarily its pervading impact on the psyche and practice of teachers.

Informing the research question I critique the nature of both order and disruption within the school as recognised and articulated by pupils. The perspectives, showing discreet differences which culminate in either challenge, uncritical conformity, or resistance, builds on literature to represent the study's initial contribution to knowledge through fieldwork. During action research I offer a change of classroom dynamics as making a potential positive contribution to shaping the whole school culture. Critical pedagogy negatively critiques injustice, unfairness and disrespect towards pupils: my original contribution has been to devise and carry out

alternative approaches to pedagogy which avoids authoritarianism and allows pupils to have greater ownership, agency, voice, and creativity within the context of respectful teacher-pupil relationships. My research places pupils not as 'Other' (Buber 1937). If I have demonstrated I can learn to consistently relate to pupils in a relational 'thou' rather than as an 'it' – an object, I hope to enable the pupils in my charge to flourish.

However, I am not seeking to implement a 'progressive' stance on the other end of the 'control' spectrum, as its philosophical accent on 'care' conflicts with the pragmatic requirements of the school culture hosting the research. My study emerges amidst the reality of a twenty-first century school in the UK where Central directives stress order and compliance against the backdrop of discipline, and amidst the mantra of pastoral care. I will argue through literature in 2.3, that these complimentary elements, which constitute appropriate authority, are instead presented as contradictory for political gain, so undermining the effectiveness of teachers. My contribution to knowledge charts the process of a teacher negotiating between control and care; between being tough and being kind. It shows my attempts to strike an accord between the pragmatic requirements stipulated in accordance with my professional role, and an ideal I hold which champions greater democracy in *my* classroom. Aided by literature, the concept of authority is redefined in my practice as an authentic presence which cultivates trust through a commitment to personal values.

The essence of transformation as a classroom leader is encapsulated by a moral/ethical imperative that good school relationships should model positive life relationships. The uncomfortable process of change and the portrayal of a psychological void left by a lifetime's adherence to dominance, is the primary focus of Chapter Six. Through this study I will make an original contribution through this construction of knowledge.

Having explored the reflexive process of how this might be acquired, and tested its application, with some successes and some failures within dynamic groups, a further contribution will be to use opportunities to contribute to teachers' initial training and Continual Professional Development (CPD). The aim is to help other teachers to develop authority without compromising themselves in the name of professionalism. Although the interactions I engage in

are unique, I intend to suggest principles, processes and tools which enable fellow practitioners to gain from my study as I learn to hold complexity and cease striving for certainty. Given the context of secondary teacher stress leading to them shortening their teaching career, I argue that offering teachers a psychological foundation in which to adapt perspectives will maximise skills to foster non-confrontational classroom relationships. I believe this can make their jobs more enjoyable, making them more likely to remain in post.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Selected literature initially served to articulate much of my lived experience of schooling, both as a pupil, and as a practitioner; it illuminated underlying philosophical and political contributions which were previously obscure to me. In principle I have sought to trace the original texts contributing to my work. Insights from the content, provided perspective, which aided and informed the process of change I undertook through action research. The following four sections examine the nature and scope of the study's problem. The primary concern, identified as pupils' disruptive behaviour, is progressively redefined to incorporate the idea that much resistance is symptomatic of an institutional experience which suppresses the young. Coverage incorporates broad themes as well as intricate nuances. An alternative conception of pedagogical relationships, and the status of the child as they interact with others, is offered in sections 2.6 and 2.7. Acting as a microcosm of the chapter, the review concludes by considering the critical role of the teacher as an abettor to the stated problem, before postulating that the individual adult may be the catalyst in search of a solution.

### **2.2: Disciplinary Discourse**

Within schools Bernstein (2000) suggested two types of discourse in pedagogic discourse: regulative and instructional. My research explores problems in pedagogic discourse, particularly when the regulative comes to dominate. Ball (2013: Kindle-mark: 334) provided a working definition, stating "discourse is the conditions under which certain statements are considered to be truth". The study of discourse has become an important perspective for educational research (Verkuyten 2002). Regulative discourse relates to a school's values and beliefs, for example, in relation to discipline and how 'misbehaviour' is understood and dealt with. Jackson (2010a) advanced the concept of fear as integral to critiquing the system I diligently served. An "ill-defined and slippery concept" (p.40), distinguished from anxiety, "fear has an *object*" (original emphasis) (Ahmed 2004: p.64), whereas anxiety does not. Exemplifying points made in Walton's 'Scared of the Kids' (2001), negative press headlines created unease about children's misbehaviour. Foucault (1981: p.100) stated "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are

joined together". The Government White Paper: *The Importance of Teaching* (2010a: p.25) utilised Freedman et al. (2008) to state the most common reason for undergraduates pursuing another profession, despite considering teaching, "is the fear of not being safe in our schools". I had rarely witnessed any semblance of violence in my career, yet I acknowledge an undefined threat stoked defensive reactions in me. As a participatory teacher-researcher in regular contact with pupils, I explore the issue from the inside.

Drawing upon research from Houghton et al. (1988), The Elton Report (1989) was the seminal enquiry which identified 'frequent low level disruptions' as the distinctive form of behaviour causing most concern to teaching staff. This has since been substantiated (Gill & Hearnshaw 1997; Neill 2002; Wright & Keetley 2003; Neill 2008). According to published statistics the most common reason for exclusion in primary, secondary and special schools in England during 2008/09, the academic year I began my research, was persistent disruptive behaviour. This conduct culminated in 1,914 permanent exclusions (29.6%) and 84,710 fixed term exclusions (23.3% of total offences) (DfE 2010b). Defining the aspects of classroom interaction qualifying for this phrase, Ofsted (2005: pp.34-35) reported:

"The most common forms of misbehaviour are incessant chatter, calling out, inattention and other forms of nuisance that irritate staff and interrupt learning".

Infantino & Little's (2005) examination of the perceptions of 350 secondary school students suggested 'talking out of turn' was the experience recognised by both pupils and staff as being the most troublesome and frequent. This was consistent with findings in Scotland which surveyed both primary and secondary schools (Black et al. 2012). Steer (2005: p.5) warned of escalation in which:

"...frequent, low level disruption... [can have a] wearing effect on staff, interrupts learning creates a climate in which it is easier for more serious incidents to occur".

A contributor to the DfE Memorandum: *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools* (2011a: p.11) succinctly captured the dynamics which I recognise and subsequently interrogated in my own classes:



“Bad behaviour spreads like a cancer; it is very difficult to contain it. One very badly behaved student impacts on a second one, who is quite badly behaved. It spreads, so that even the very good students become somewhat unsettled. That creates a situation where you have low level behaviour. People often dismiss that, and say, “It’s just low-level behaviour, that’s okay”. You’d be amazed, however, at how disruptive low-level behaviour is”.

Finding correlation with Elton’s findings from the 1980s, Steer’s (2005: p.5) reference to “...low level disturbances... having a wearing effect on staff...”, a volume of tabloid headlines are readily available to associate pupils’ behaviour with teachers’ emotional health and portray school children through emotive terms. An example from The Express (01/03/11 emphasis added) reads:

“One council revealed that its teachers were so stressed they took off almost 10,000 days – the equivalent of 50 school years – after being abused or simply ground down by *young yobs*.”

The category of low level disruptions has maintained its prominence for both permanent and fixed term exclusions throughout the research period (DfE 2011b; DfE 2012b; DfE 2013). The classification consistently dwarfed comparative percentages for physical assault which had been conveniently converted into a quantifiable headline figure by the Coalition White Paper (DfE 2010a) to magnify a marginal element of school life. The Paper cited “in 2007, almost 18,000 pupils were permanently excluded [11.1%] or suspended [4.7%] for attacking a member of staff”. The statistics’ source (DfE 2009) did not define the nature of ‘physical force against an adult’. The authors representing the Government also neglected to clarify the fact that the highest percentage of the fixed term incidents they cited, did not take place in state secondary schools. Statistics reveal a much higher proportion in primary and special schools (DfE 2009: Table 10). Visser (2006: p.4) found educationalists [and politicians] can be apt at describing “violent and challenging behaviours but arriving at a definition that is precise and transferrable across settings, time and context is fraught with difficulties”. Steer (2010: p.8) pointed out “Behaviour standards in schools are high for the great majority of young people. The

misconduct of a few represents a small percentage of the seven million pupils in the school system". Previously he had stated: "It is important that the gap between the public perception of schools and the reality in schools is not allowed to grow" (Steer 2009: pp.22-23).

Out of a discourse of crime and punishment, Wright (2009) identified the first of three constructions that I will critique ('bad', 'mad' and 'sad'). The language was of offence, blame, punishment and discipline. High profile critical incidents such as the murder of Philip Lawrence, a Head-teacher protecting one of his pupils at the school gates, and the Dunblane shootings a year later in 1996, fed this discourse of 'badness' (Hayden 2011) and associate fears around safety in schools. Rigoni & Walford (1998) suggested the Labour Government's uncritical enthusiasm for Canter's 'Assertive Discipline' (Canter 1988) shortly after in the 1997 White Paper was their response to a 'moral panic' (Cohen 1972) about declining standards of discipline in schools. Visser (2006) advised caution regarding the media's selective coverage of 'violence' in schools, Haydn (2012) highlighted its propensity to sensationalise issues around behaviour. Hayden (2011) and Hayden & Martin (2011), stressed that links between school behaviour and criminality were unfounded.

Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the 2011 UK riots, Education Minister, Michael Gove again utilised the discourse stating "We cannot say often enough that what we saw this summer was a straightforward conflict between right and wrong" (BBC 01/09/11). Although predominantly involving adults and not children (Ministry of Justice 2011) (MoJ), the highly publicised events strengthened the political demand which had been made in the White Paper at the end of 2010, for stronger discipline in schools. Having previously spoken of a "discipline package where kids respect, and even fear, their teachers, not the other way round" (Telegraph: 31/07/07), the Prime Minister David Cameron (On-line 15/08/11) announced:

"These riots were not about poverty... [we need to] confront the slow-motion moral collapse... schools without discipline... we need an education system which reinforces the message that if you do the wrong thing you'll be disciplined... [citing exemplar schools]... they foster pride through strict uniform and behaviour policies".

Robin (2004: p.16) focused on the way leaders are able to define fear so that it “dominates the political agenda, crowding out others”. Clark (1998) critiquing draconian school discipline, noted the view that “children by definition are uneducated; they are perceived to be ‘barbarians at the gate’” (citing Peters 1964: p.43). For Lee (2001) the puritanical view led to notions of socialising, taming, civilising or disciplining through punishment. Yilmaz (2009) associated the historical view that people were hereditarily bad by nature with consequential strictness, which is traditionally associated with schools (Aydin 2000; 2001).

The concept of authority is used as the link between the institution of school and the teacher as its custodian. In accordance with stated discourse Súilleabháin’s (1983) definition was inclusive of de jure authority, in which the authority of teachers is bestowed by parents and society. “Using the word ‘authority’ in the de jure sense is making the normative claim that some individual has a right to rule” (Steutel & Spiecker 1990: p.326). Whilst corporal punishment was outlawed in 1986, Steer (2005) reminded of power enshrined in legislation stating, teachers as proxy had statutory rights to discipline, to search and restrain pupils, and to hold pupils accountable beyond school gates. The emphasis was maintained as the Coalition Government negated the legal requirement for schools to give parents twenty-four hour notice for detentions (DfE 2010a). Schools’ legislative powers also extended to Head-teachers’ taking procedures to prosecute parents whose children truant (Zhang 2004; Ross 2009). Riley (2007), showed the legislation was consistent with attempts to hold parents accountable for their children’s general anti-social behaviour through criminalising previously non-criminal behaviour. Education Minister, Gove was more specific, announcing proposals to impose “stronger sanctions” on parents whose children misbehave in class and who fail to “show respect for their teacher” (BBC 07/06/14).

A broad spectrum depicting application of teacher’s authority in the classroom can be viewed through Pupil Control Ideology (PCI), a model, developed by Willower et al. (1973). Hoy & Rees (1977) defined PCI along a continuum ranging from custodial or authoritarian to humanistic. The former polarised stance “stresses the maintenance of order, mistrust of pupils and a punitive, moralistic approach to pupil control” (Hoy & Rees 1977: p.24). Such teachers had a tendency to react personally and judgementally towards students who misbehave (Lunenburg

& Mankowsky 2000). By contrast, humanistic ideology views behaviour in psychological and sociological terms rather than moralistic (Helsel & Willower 1973); it “emphasises an accepting trustful view of pupils and an optimism concerning their ability to be self-disciplining and responsible” (Hoy & Rees 1977: p.24). Relations were defined through warmth and acceptance (Grolnick 2003). Hargreaves et al. (1975: p.261) study of ‘deviance provocative’ and ‘deviance insulative’ teachers, defined by differing actions which either exacerbated or calmed the situation, adds to this dichotomy. The latter response manifests because “He trusts them”. The theme is revisited in 2.6.

Whilst Elton (1989) found that some staff took the view that bad behaviour was always entirely the fault of pupils, Waterhouse (2004: p.74) was more balanced: “the Labelling tradition has been particularly sensitive to recognizing that the origins of deviance are to be found not in the characteristics and dispositions of ‘deviants’, but in the interpersonal processes occurring in situated incidents”. Downes & Rock (2011: p.144) argued that reaction to deviant behaviour is “a variable, not a constant”.

Cortazzi (1990) identified a broad range of ‘polarities’ in teachers’ thinking. However, he concluded, rather than completely adhering to one of them staff tend to oscillate between the tensions of the two poles according to the demands of the situation. With PCI, authoritarianism has become a default discourse for many teachers (Porter 2006). Yilmaz’s (2009) study found that the greater the custodial control ideology assessed, the more an authoritative classroom management style was observed in participants’ practice. Unal & Unal’s (2009) study considered the relevance of time to a teacher’s perspectives on discipline. Researching the impact of service longevity on people management they found a significant difference, suggesting that experienced teachers preferred to be more controlling. In my own career, I reflect this tendency correlated with the increased responsibility which came with promotions. Each position meant I was more accountable for the actions of others. I had to justify staff and pupil performance relating to my curriculum area. I also note the more experienced I became, the more my authority seemed to be entwined with my status.

Often distilled into the single word 'discipline', Ball et al. (2011) provided contemporary context, arguing that extrinsic behaviour management approaches were predominant due to the forcefulness of the standards agenda and the emphasis on meeting targets. Seeking to legislate competence (Ryan & Brown 2005), functionalism required the concepts of 'effectiveness' and 'efficiency' were quantifiable so to inform policies to raise 'standards'. Schooling as a process is rendered into input-output calculation (Ball 2013). In an era in which even discursive factors were inclusive in a moralistic discourse, Vaughan (2001: p.12) claimed "the school effectiveness model... [polarised] schools into 'good' and 'bad' schools as well as good and bad students".

Indicative of 'good' schools, such as my own school portrayed in Chapter Four, the HCEC (2011: p.26) has reported "Ninety three per cent of teachers responding to a survey organised by NASUWT said that their schools had a whole-school behaviour policy". Embedded in the "behaviour policy at the school level is an ensemble of issues/fragments, principles, directives/imperatives and procedures/practices which are messy and complex" (Ball et al. 2011: p.1). Consequently classroom management methods, such as Canter's (1988) Assertive Discipline (AD), "are frequently chosen for their short-term efficacy and are seldom examined in terms of their hidden assumptions or their influence on larger educational or socialization processes" (Rigoni & Walford 1998: p.445).

Situated on the political right of the power continuum (Larrivee 2005; Schmuck & Schmuck 2001), AD is essentially "a no nonsense approach to setting and consistently enforcing classroom rules" (Brown 1983: p.175) which defines successful classrooms as those that are under firm teacher control (Swinson 1990). Presented as a continuing professional development programme (Swinson & Melling 1995) based on a neo-Skinnerian behaviour modification model, Rigoni & Walford (1998) considered how the authoritarian package has attracted controversy as it became increasingly integrated within British schools since 1991 (Swinson & Cording 2002). Integral to 'Positive Assertive Management' (PAM) in Scotland (Watt et al. 1999), and implemented in half of authorities in Wales (Estyn 2004; 2006), it is the official endorsement of the model by the Labour Government in the White Paper *'Excellence in Schools'* (DfEE 1997) which ensured its prominence in my coverage.

A multi-million pound American franchise, AD was criticised in the United States and subsequently in the UK. Rigoni & Walford (1998) expressed concern that there was no indication that New Labour had engaged in an extensive debate in light of criticism of the method over the preceding decade. They pointed out official endorsement suggested the benefits of Assertive Discipline were incontrovertible. The original program in America attracted a number of critical articles, for example, Render et al. (1989) and Curwin & Mendler (1988; 1997) which questioned not only the validity of evidence, considered forthwith, but also the philosophical assumptions underpinning advocated methods. Gay's (2001: p.174) observation of staff attending an Assertive Discipline workshop asking whether the school system "had become involved in any legal suits since its inception", is illustrative of underlying concerns about the programme's ethical standing. Such debate finds philosophical deliberation entwined in a struggle in which pragmatic effectiveness is, it seems, considered as paramount.

In the UK, supportive articles (Swinson & Melling 1995; Melling & Swinson 1998; Watt et al. 1999), are countered by commentators expressing doubts (Rigoni & Walford 1998; Robinson & Maines 1994). AD prefers not to talk about punishing pupils, so punishment is repackaged as 'logical consequences' which, whether framed as sanctions or rewards, Kohn (1996: p.2) claimed are essentially a collection of bribes; the latter strategy equating to "control by seduction". These aspects are acknowledged within this study. At issue, was whether learning should be reduced to students being quietly occupied? Steer (2005: p.2) asserted: "the quality of learning, teaching and behaviour in schools are inseparable issues". Munn et al. (1990) made an important distinction between disciplinarian and educator, reminding that being effective at getting the class to work well was not the same thing as being an effective teacher. Swinson & Cording (2002: p.74) acknowledged that Canter & Canter (1992) "say very little about the content of teaching programmes or differentiation". The lack of comment on the nature of educational experience, led to Rigoni & Walford (1998) querying whether 'on-task' and 'learning' are two separate concepts. The roles of the curriculum, the quality of teaching and the social interactions taking place at school are largely downplayed. Consequently, the institutional, political and contextual dimensions of indiscipline are not made problematic.

The Elton Report (1989: p.66) noted that “some schools seem preoccupied with bad behaviour”, whilst Roache & Lewis (2011) observed that punishment was essentially a universal given in the classroom when misbehaviour occurs. Curwin & Mendler (1997: p.11) argued the draconian measures were common responses to perceived disobedience as “what we call ‘discipline’ gives children the message that they will be punished if they don’t do what they are told”. Robinson & Maines (1994: p.196) pointed to Article 12 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which gave schools the responsibility to “assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child”. Birch (1999) suggested by presenting consequences as a choice, the teacher no longer became the ‘bad person’. McDaniel (1989: p.81) asked the questions at the core of my study: “Are their choices real choices or contrived ones? Am I more interested in power and control or with helping students towards self-discipline?”

Disputing philosophical accusations, Canter (1988) claimed validated effectiveness. High profile, though limited evidence was offered by Mandelbaum et al. (1983). The inquiry showed the plight of an individual teacher, battling to cope with a third grade class behaving inappropriately 96 per cent of the time, was able to reduce the obstructive behaviour through employment of AD methods. As Render et al.’s (1989) critique pointed out, in such an extreme case *any* intervention would be viewed as beneficial in comparison to the situation reported. The nature of ‘inappropriate behaviour’ was not defined or commented on and, predictably, the pupils’ perspectives are not considered. Infantino & Little (2005) found the difference in those behaviours identified by teachers and by pupils as most troublesome and most frequent, may have been due to a lack of clarity as to what constitutes unacceptable classroom behaviour. My pupils provide their perspectives in Chapters Five and Six.

Canter (1988: p.71) claimed that Mandelbaum’s conclusions were supported by other researchers, teachers and administrators who related substantial reductions in disruptive behaviour as a result of employing AD. “Assertive Discipline ... is based on experience and research ... [for] opinions [such as those advanced by Curwin & Mendler 1988] are easy to come by; facts are hard to dispute”. ‘Facts’ in the form of evidence were advanced with undiluted

confidence as proponents such as McCormack (1989: p.77) declared “No other copyrighted classroom management program is better researched”.

Canter neglected to clarify whether the 'teachers and administrators' he proceeded to include as part of his evidence base, produced rigorous research or whether their contributions were confined to their opinions. McCormack (1989: p.79), a prominent advocate in defence of AD stated that her information came from practitioners who “told me, ‘it works’” and from phone calls to officials. “Can Assertive Discipline improve learning?” asked Canter (1988), as a prelude to citing McCormack’s study of off-task behaviour during reading instruction. The resounding affirmative answer is presented through a statistic which equated to a headline figure of ‘5 hours of teaching time saved per month’. The unequivocal conclusion is derived from a creative calculation:

“Classrooms using Assertive Discipline had 5 per cent more on-task time than classrooms not using the program (pp.79-80). That’s 15 minutes per day, 75 minutes per week, 5 hours per month more time teachers have to teach and all students have to learn” (p.73).

The summative figure omitted any consideration of complex variables inherent in classrooms, to assume the attained statistic to be an indisputable constant with widespread application.

The questioning of the validity of earlier research was taken up by Render et al. (1989) who disputed the continuous claim, based on purported research that Assertive Discipline would produce 80% reduction in student misbehaviour. The authors argued that after 12 years one would expect to find an extensive data base but could only find 16 studies which were gathered in some systematic way in order to present results. Ensuing criticism described the evidence as sparse and unsophisticated, generated primarily from novice researchers.

Broad reference to the considerable body of behaviourist studies which formed AD’s philosophical base (Rigoni & Walford 1998) were countered by Porter’s (2006) critique which emphasised the majority of studies were conducted in atypical conditions. Intensive interventions often conducted in clinical settings have produced findings which do not equate to evidence that the results would be replicated within the natural classroom environment



(Nelson et al. 1999; Erwin et al. 2001). Porter (2006) concluded behaviourism seemed to be ineffective for those most in need of help – the ‘significant minority’. Though there was minimal research on the effects of authoritarian approaches in schools, she pointed to a robust body of research into parenting styles. Justified by Wentzel’s (1997) findings, which stated children’s relations with parents and teachers bring about comparable benefits, ensuing literature comprehensively rendered stringent strategies as integral to reciprocal resistant and rebellious retorts from minors. Curwin & Mendler (1997) cautioned that children should not just obey a person simply because they were in a position of authority. Maines & Robinson (1995: p.11) rejected AD’s empirical validity as “strong and blatant ‘hard sell’ of the programme” and broadened the underlying issues:

“Assertive Discipline encourages teachers to believe that student behaviour problems are internal to students rather than teaching methods, curriculum, materials or institutional or societal conditions” (Robinson & Maines 1994: p.199).

Araujo (2005) and Heath et al. (2006) alerted to the complex nature of disruptiveness. The Sutton Trust (2010) and Higgins et al. (2013) emphasised underlying factors which, they argued, contribute to dysfunctional behaviour in schools. The Sutton Trust (2001: p.5) stated “In our view things are far less simple. The roots of the problem lie deep in our educational and social history”. Hayden (2011) provided a holistic perspective for this study asserting:

“Problematic behaviour [that is experienced] in and around schools is generally a symptom of a wider problem (p.23); [the schooling system in Britain] “is profoundly and damagingly unequal in a way that actively helps create the social conditions many fear most” (p.3).

Pollard & Triggs (2000: p.51) affirmed “the opportunities and constraints children experience in the present have to be understood in the context of both historic and contemporary structures and interests”. Regardless of inequalities apparent between the private and state sectors, termed by Sutton Trust (2001) as ‘Educational Apartheid’, Hatcher (1994: p54) identified the implications of schools’ adopting a management model akin to business and industry so to drive up ‘standards’. Highlighting “a shift from traditional forms of bureaucratic control, toward

techniques of ideological control”, the combination of state regulation and quasi market relationships reinforced the idea of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ schools - and were being used to inform parents’ choice. Fielding’s (1997) argument that school effectiveness research typically diverts attention away from structural impediments such as poverty and inequality, is most pertinent for the broad argument being made.

In accordance with a global neo-liberal consensus towards the political centre and centre-Right (Youdell 2011), reform agendas have pursued marketization and privatisation in the public sector as parents compete as ‘consumers’ (Keddie et al. 2011). Despite Ball (1997) suggesting the fabrication was futile due to inherent paradoxical nature of institutions, the prominent discourse I am emphasising is substantiated by Ofsted’s (2012) published inspection criteria. Integral to the judgment of schools is explicit reference to ‘behaviour *and safety*’ as one of the four main categories (*italics added*). Cornell & Mayer (2010) recognised ‘order’ and ‘safety’ as conceptually offering a more fertile ground than the emphasis on violence. As stated, whilst many schools seeking a whole school consistent approach to discipline adhered to a behaviour policy (HCEC 2011), some had gone as far as to infuse a philosophy which was acutely synonymous with criminology – *zero tolerance*.

Inherent in zero tolerance policies was the assumption that the objective pursuit of order derives from a positivist value base (James & Freeze 2006). Defined as a highly structured disciplinary approach that permitted little flexibility in predetermined outcomes (Gregory & Cornell 2009), Martinez (2009) raised questions about its popularity in US schools. As with AD, she argued that the evidence base was lacking and its effectiveness questionable as ‘studies of school suspensions have consistently found that “up to 40% of school suspensions are due to repeat offenders” (Skiba 2000: p.13). In effect it “doesn’t solve a problem — it shifts it” (Ayers et al. 2001: p.80). In spite of high profile incidents such as Columbine in 1999, and more recently Sandy Hook in 2012 which involved students using firearms to attack peers and staff (BBC 28/12/13), in accordance with Hayden’s (2011) review of UK schools, Mayer & Furlong (2010: p.16) concluded that American schools are basically safe places for children. They claimed “National surveys that inform research, policy, and practice have been designed for different purposes and can present conflicting findings”. Adopted by UK schools, the original

strategy in the US was proposed by politicians' intent on addressing serious offenses such as possession of firearms. Correspondingly, Airport style metal detectors to detect knives are evident in urban areas (NCES 2013). Following suit, in 2009 the east London borough of Waltham Forest became the first to install detectors in all of its secondary schools (The Times 29/04/09). The recent murder of a teacher in a classroom in Leeds has reignited debate about the extent to which screening should be adopted in the UK (Mail Online 29/04/14). More commonly, in schools, zero-tolerance policies are now applied to 'offences' such as swearing, truancy, insubordination, disrespect, and dress-code violation (Skiba 2000). As a result, Martinez (2009: p.154) argued zero-tolerance policy had "moved beyond its original intent". On a philosophical level, James & Freeze (2006) focused their arguments on the contradiction of practising zero tolerance in inclusive schools which suppress individual expression, whilst (Burton, et al. 2009) highlighted the inconsistency between Government targets for low exclusion rates with a zero tolerance policy.

Conducive with zero tolerance, Hayden & Martin (2011) identified the growing prevalence of CCTV in UK schools as symbolic of prominent discourses around crime and safety. Hope (2009: p.204) highlighted its broader function to "control tardy students as part of a wider disciplinary discourse that included registers and late arrival logs". However, in accordance to Foucault's (1983) notion of productive power, referring to the ability of language and discourse to produce subjects such as compliant pupils, the culture of surveillance also provided a space within which students could forge their own identities through playful resistance (Hope 2010). Importantly, Hayden (2011: p.6) reconceptualised the conduct as "'naughtiness or 'testing the boundaries'". Porter (2006) reminded that defined effectiveness, which brought about order, was not the sole criteria by which we must assess the merits of disciplinary measures; our responses to pupils' disruptions also had to be ethical. Walker et al. (2004) associated an ethical system with personal and professional values. The distinction between these terms are defined later in the chapter and personalised in Chapter Three. Whilst Steer (2009) commented that it was important not to demonise our youth, Gatongi (2007: p.208) offered pragmatic advice advocating the necessity of "separating the person from the bad behaviour". The perspective challenges the moralistic discourse prevalent within this section which, I argue, utilises AD, zero

tolerance, and surveillance to safeguard the sociological and economic aims and interests of the system.

### **2.3: Pupils within the system**

I argue here that to adopt Gatongi's (2007) outlook, it is necessary for the teacher to reconceptualise their primary role; there is a requirement to empathise with children as they negotiate their roles as pupils. My review of literature challenged my narrow and insular perspectives which had led me to uncritically uphold the authoritarian status quo. It helped me to look beyond the child's behaviour to contemplate underlying issues. I draw on literature which conveys an inherent tension when the complex psychological and sociological needs of learners push against the boundaries of established structures. Porter (2006) pointed out the only student need that Canter (1988) identified is the 'need' for limits. I drew progressively on my own childhood experiences to dispute the validity of this inadequate view which continues to serve for many as justification for stringent measures. In essence I began to see schooling (again) from the pupils' point of view, now conceiving much observed behaviour as a legitimate protest, though often expressed in inappropriate ways. Selected literature provides context for Holt's (1964a) conclusions, which remain relevant, - that school performance is impaired due to pupils being embroiled in a process which rendered them fearful of failure, bored and confused.

For some children, an internal disengagement with formal schooling can evoke rejection of the implicit norms of school, through passive as well as active means, rendering them liable to sanctions. Lumby (2012) argued that the system and policies pathologise some children. Trowler (2010: p.50) noted a "striking absence [of] student voice in the literature on student engagement". Likewise, classroom or school rules, school and government policies, pedagogies and curriculum frameworks were usually developed independently from students (Raby 2005). Pupils learn how to avoid trouble with teachers (Davies 1983), whilst others opt out and truant from school. More than 450,000 pupils in maintained schools in England (7%) persistently missed school in the autumn term of 2010 and the spring term of 2011 (DfE 2011c). The detrimental findings were naturally of concern to the Government responsible for

implementing measures which sought to increase the country's economic growth amidst international competitors (DfE 2010a). Shirlow & Pain (2003) referred to different scales of fear permeating internationally, nationally and locally; fears may be about the UK performing relatively poorly on the global stage; or fear of the 'naming and shaming' of 'failing' schools (Jackson 2010a). For Reid (2008) unease about attendance was associated with concerns about behaviour and prospects for attainment. Jonasson (2011) equated truancy with pupils' non-participation whilst physically in school. Negative attitudes to school which may manifest through obstructive behaviour are associated with high levels of perceived stress (Seiffge-Krenke et al. 2009).

Some authors attribute fear to institutional pressures. Owen-Yeates (2005: p.42) found that Year 11 students' main source of stress within a "market-led education system" was a concern with academic performance. Test-anxiety, specifically for those in Key Stage 4 has been the subject of Putwain's research (2007; 2008; 2009; 2011; Putwain et al. 2009). Lazzarato (2009: p.120) argued neo-liberalism produces "a micro-politics of little fears". Putwain (2009) extended the academic fear of 'failure' to parents. Jackson (2010a: p.43) found, in light of discourses which foster competitive individualism, even speaking about certain fears can lead to negative self-appraisal, marking pupils as "failed neo-liberal subjects" due to a perceived inability to cope. Regardless, on such occasions there is an onus on the teacher, on their enactment of de jure authority, to insist or even compel a pupil to 'work'. Resistance is often interpreted as a threat to the maintenance of classroom order or "institutional equilibrium" (Slee 1995: p.73; Raby 2005). Expanding on Lazzarato's (2009) point, teachers who "'under-perform' are subject to moral approbation and the tyranny of 'little fears'" (Ball 2013: Kindle-mark: 1975). McNeil (1996) argued standardization initiates defensive teaching, aiming for minimal resistance whilst satisfying institutional requirements.

There is a cumulative sense of tension amongst students as they negotiate their role in the system, their good performance being important to staff who fear the consequences of their pupils' 'failure' (Jackson 2010): the "force and brute logic of performance" (Ball 2013: Kindle-mark: 1976) renders 'failure' in a performative system as letting ourselves, our colleagues and our institution down. A dichotomy, which frames pupils' experience and illustrates the

dilemmas facing teachers, can be traced back to the era of modernity. Usher & Edwards (1994) wrote that education, besides being an instrument for emancipation and enlightenment, is also an instrument of power, control, and legitimization.

The inclination for teachers to interpret observation of pupils being 'off-task' as evidence of disruption which they feel compelled to instantly address, is at the crux of my research. Concerning such authoritarian attitudes, Foucault's (1980) articulation of power is illuminating. Alongside the 'juridical power' embedded in the institution, and the subsequent status conferred to the teacher to coerce and reward (French & Raven 1959), Foucault identified disciplinary power as circulating within the minutiae of practices inside schools. This discourse of power as mobile and contingent, includes the possibility of resistance (Youdell 2011) through low level disruptions. The core of my study asks: if authoritarianism is reduced, will acts of resistance be reduced? To grasp the intricacies of disruption within the explicit structural arrangements in schools, one has to consider the existence of a hidden curriculum and counter-school culture. However, it is important to stipulate the latter is not representative of the experience of all, or even the majority of school children. Blatchford's (1996) longitudinal research of pupils' perspectives on school and school work, found little support for strong claims about growing disaffection toward school. Conversely, this is countered by a later longitudinal study which found of those attending more than a quarter of children in Years 9, 10 and 11 actively dislike school, with only a third highly engaged with aspirations to study to degree level (Ross 2009). This correlates with The Good Childhood Report (2012).

Culture is concerned with the production and legitimation of particular ways of life transmitted in schools implicitly, as well as through the explicit formal curriculum. For Illich (1978: p.88), this was class related: schooling rituals hide from "its participants the contradictions between the myth of an egalitarian [or democratic] society and the class conscious reality it certifies". Much learning is unconscious or tacit (Cornbleth 1984). For Kentli (2009) the unwritten curriculum transmitted the socialization of schooling, creating the fabric of false consciousness (Portelli 1993) teaching children to be docile (Jackson 1968): in Latin, *docilis* means both docile and teachable (Hoskin 1990). I used the terms compliance and conformity to convey this pliable state. Slee (1994) argued that discipline policy is increasingly deployed to conceal ineffective

schooling. Meighan (1977) reported pupils were able to recognise some aspects of the hidden curriculum, including some of the labelling processes, and could articulate the feelings of alienation that resulted. In regard to the 'implicit curricula' (Cornbleth 1984), Carr & Landon (1999) raised questions about the nature of the teacher's moral role.

Research also points to gender distinctions. Bessett and Gualtieri (2002) considered Willis' (1977) portrayal of boys' counter-school culture compelling and accurate. Subsequent exploration of the motives behind 'laddishness' (Francis 1999) is relevant. Myhill (2002) used the terms 'Bad Boys' and 'Good Girls' to extend the application of moralistic discourse. Myhill & Jones (2006) found a reinforcement of social stereotyping of female compliance and conformity; and male challenge and individuality. Pupils reported teachers' expectations of boys and girls as being different, more being expected of girls both in terms of achievement and behaviour. They perceived girls received less negative attention from teachers, whilst boys are reprimanded and monitored more. Francis (1999) drew on notions of masculinity to differentiate between boys' and girls' behaviour, whilst Hirst & Cooper (2008: p.439) suggested there was an acceptance that 'boys will be boys'. Jackson (2003) considered fear of the 'feminine' which was affirmed by Stoessiger (2006) who observed overtly masculine boys tended to adopt a self-image which declared 'what they are not' – or what they perceived girls to be. Jackson (2010a) identified a caution around being seen as vulnerable. I expand on this in section 6.7.5.

In response to 'high profile' boys' underachievement (Epstein et al. 1998), Government campaigns to recruit greater numbers of males, especially in primary schools (Francis et al. 2008; Skelton 2009) assumed that teachers' classroom behaviour and interaction with pupils may be predicted on the basis of their gender - that solutions might lay dormant in staff gender (Stoessiger 2006). Lamote & Engels (2010) study of student teachers' professional identity found an important gender difference: while male students tended to attach more importance to discipline in the classroom, their female counterparts focused more on student involvement. These are qualified through reference to similar findings in which teachers reflect on their formative experiences of schooling (Hagemann & Rose 1998), and the influence of significant role-models (Korthagen 2004).

Stereotypes of male teachers as disciplinarian and 'robust' (King 2000; Sargent 2001) have prompted debate about whether men teachers can provide disaffected boys with role-models. Whilst Jackson (2010b: p.516) expressed concern that this could be manifested through male teachers adopting laddish performance to "'prove' their masculinity", Francis (2008: p.119) found a wide diversity in male teachers' practice. She argued that the fluidity of masculine and feminine constructions are not confined to bodies as performance contained gendered subjectivity. An exemplar is offered through "Mr Castillo's emotional and apparently needy response to 'his boys'". Skelton et al. (2009) demonstrated the complexity of developing 'one size fits all' approach to gender equity, though finding 'gender mattered' in terms of pupils' construction of their own gender identities. The relevance of subjectivities to this discussion is reinforced by Jackson (2006: p.350) who critiques the term 'ladette' defined by one of her research participants as "typical male but a female" to draw some parity between genders. Charlton's (2007) review of 'good' girls and 'bad' girls and Myhill's (2002) study further challenged the current tendency to construct underachievement in terms of gender.

Perhaps, obstructive responses to authority were natural reactions to an institutional setting which deprives children of power and dignity (Laws & Davies 2000). Richardson (2010) suggested a key denominator between those who stayed engaged beyond 14, and those who expressed their dissatisfaction, was simply the former group were more willing to remain in the role of 'pupil'. However, literature offers more succinct determinants from which to comprehend the behaviour of individuals who habitually flout rituals and resist or contest rules. Their 'counter-culture' elicits debate which draws on cognitive, medical and socio-economic deficits. Dissecting the concept of 'laddishness', which feeds the media's emotive representation of pupils, professional discourse offers three distinct but connected meta-discourses of children's behaviour. In addition to criminology, Wright (2009) drew attention to psychiatry and patronage —which combine to construct children as 'bad, mad or sad' (Thompson 1986). For Usher & Edwards (2003: p.90) a "discourse authorises certain people to speak and correspondingly silences others, or at least makes their voices less authoritative. A discourse is therefore exclusionary". Such pupils are attributed labels such as the "underclass perceived as feckless and undeserving" (Gavron 2009: p.2). In the next section I draw on



literature which illustrates the overt and contradictory responses emanating from authorities. This, I argue, demonstrates the propensity of politicians to shape discourse, which may impact on teachers' mentality and subsequent relations with children in the classroom.

#### **2.4: Behaviour issues as SEN**

Pupils identified as having Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) and those with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), are of particular interest to this review. Hayden (2011) pointed out that most Special Educational Needs (SEN) are not BESD. While BESD is an imprecise term (Cole & Visser 2005), aspects of the behavioural and emotional difficulties displayed by pupils with BESD typically include lacking concentration and being hyperactive, presenting challenging behaviour and being disruptive (SEN Code of Practice, DfES 2001). Tweedale (2002) charted the demise of specialist provision and the introduction of Pupil Referral Units (PRU) in 1997 to operate a 'revolving door policy' to modify behaviour with the specific intention of returning students back to mainstream classes. Later, I will critique a version of this practice. Cole et al. (2003) found, despite national pressure to move towards the inclusion of all pupils, LEAs continued to find it impossible to educate a small percentage of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) on mainstream sites. The authors questioned the appropriateness of some existing mainstream settings in comparison to 'alternative' provision offered by EBD schools where a supportive, nurturing environment was in evidence. The description is considered in relation to the pragmatic reality facing 'inclusive' schools in an era of competition.

I argue increasingly, competing priorities determined by the marketization of education, are relevant in comprehending disruption, and interpreting schools' responses to it. Kniveton's (2004) study of the views of 'significant others' (teachers and parents) on the difficulties presented by inclusion, identified a broad range of SEN categories and found that children with behaviour problems were considered least suitable for mainstream education. Goodman & Burton (2010) found long standing concerns from the teaching profession regarding inappropriate training and capacity for successful inclusion, specifically BESD. These mirrored concerns acknowledged in policy over 20 years ago. Visser (2003) offered a comprehensive

review of the complexity inherent in understanding and managing challenging behaviour with specific reference to SEN. My study is particularly mindful of research cited in the Coalition Green Paper: *Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability* (DfE 2011d) to inform the themes integral to my inquiry. Concurring with Visser (2003), it commented:

“the identification of the root causes of behaviour difficulties can be complicated. For example, some children with BESD can have underlying communication problems and the presenting issue is caused by frustration with their education” (DfE 2011d: p.69).

Secondary schools’ most common special need was moderate learning difficulty (DCSF 2009); Steer (2009: p.43) affirmed its significance, “Much poor behaviour has its origins in the inability of the child to access learning”. In relation to the working terms ‘bad’ and ‘mad’, Youdell (2011) made an interesting distinction between a failed student deemed an anti-school boy, and his subsequent designation as BESD. Here the boy’s recognition as ‘cool-bad’ was undercut, threatened by the label ‘aberrant-mad’. Correlating with literature on academic setting, Mowat (2010: p.202) warned “the dangers of stereotyping and labelling abound”. I consider this factor in 2.5.

BESD increased from 13.9 per cent in 2005 to 22.8 per cent in 2010 encompassing 154 440 individuals (DfES 2005; DCSF 2009). The trend raises questions about the reasons for the increase. Ball (2013) charted a long history of policy and legislation which sought “an explanation for children’s failure, disengagement, distraction, anger and defiance in their genetic and medical profiles” (Slee 2011: p.151). The incoming Coalition Government expressed a concern about over-identification (DfE 2011d). As explained below, this was a view I was uncritically sympathetic to in my earlier practice. The statistics above might also be read against a progressive shift, charting how emotional and behavioural difficulties have been reconstructed in British education. Jones (2003: p.154) critiqued the current educational model, which discarded the medical model of maladjustment (pre-1980s), in favour of viewing such difficulties as matters of discipline within school. The model renders the “nature of psychological problems as irrelevant to the practical goals of supporting the pedagogical

enterprise". Watson et al. (2012), in their coverage of children's social and emotional well-being, considered the significance of inclusion policies. In a functionalist educational system which purports measured efficiency, schools are rendered as sites of normalisation which, in light of standardization "re-territorialized difference as problematic" (Allen 2004: p.420). As an authoritarian I would then have been inclined to view SEN as an excuse rather than a reason for much of the disruption I encountered. Despite my roles suggesting I was progressively becoming more expert in pupil behaviour, my understanding of, or more accurately, my ability to recall the details of specific special needs to inform my approach during lessons, was never better than rudimentary. I am now embarrassed by this insufficiency and confused as to how this was never deemed important enough to rectify by either myself or my employers. Subsequent literature intimates how teachers embroiled in the educational system might come to view these contributory factors as subsidiary to their functional role as an authority figure.

The link between schools' provision for special needs, concerns around discipline, and the increasing precedence of educational goals is key for this review. The DfE (2011d: p.22) stated pupils on 'School Action Plus', those identified with SEN pupils but without a Statement, are "20 times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion [in the academic year 2007/08] ... than peers with no SEN". Forthcoming literature presented in this chapter indicates disciplinary decisions are increasingly political. Barton & Slee's (1999: p.3) observations about the complex matrix of issues represented by "the contradictory educational policy imperatives of 'competition' and 'selection' on one hand, and 'inclusive education' on the other", are viewed as particularly relevant in light of current educational policy. Harris & Ranson (2005) identified an officially endorsed emphasis on performativity was based on the twin pillars of accountability (inspection, test scores, league tables) and standards (target setting, monitoring, raising achievement plans). Since Rutter et al. (1979), school effectiveness research assumes the 'problem' of improvement is essentially internal to the school and one which the school can itself solve. In accordance to the 'top-down' model, the invitation for Head-teachers to "insist on tougher discipline" as illustrative of Academy freedom (DfE 2010a: p.53) provides the background for interpreting subsequent statistics which show higher exclusion rates for academies in comparison to those schools which remain under the jurisdiction of Local

Authorities (DfE 2012c). Signalling a shift from comprehensive to market values (Gewirtz et al. 1995), Ball et al. (1994) sensed a change in emphasis from pupil needs to pupil performance. Ever more relevant, Parffrey warned in 1994 of the dilemma facing schools in an age of increasing accountability:

‘Naughty children’ are bad news in a market economy. No one wants them. They are bad for the image of the school, they are bad for the league tables, they are difficult and time-consuming, they upset and stress the teachers (p.108).

The evolvement of functionalism into institutions such as schools (Watson et al. 2012) over the past three decades (Roulstone & Prideaux 2008) implicates teachers. It invites debate in light of directives stipulated in Government and school policy, as to how classroom practitioners can appropriately and effectively respond to behaviour which obstructs the learning of others. Didaskalou & Millward (2002) noted children with emotional difficulties were being neglected in schools, as teachers learnt quick-fix behaviour techniques such as Assertive Discipline to contain behaviour in the classrooms. Whilst mantra which advocates a “sharper focus on discipline” (DfE 2010b: p.20) is central to this review, it is the incongruous portrayal of, and approaches to the ‘significant minority’, and its effects on the teacher, which is integral to my study.

Consistent with the contradictions and tensions inherent within education policies advanced by the preceding Labour Government (Harris & Ranson 2005; Burton et al. 2009), the Coalition Government initially disassociated the ‘minority’ with SEN. Conspicuous by their absence, The White Paper (2010a) was careful not to insinuate a direct correlation between pupils with SEN and advocated disciplinarian measures. In conjunction, despite detailed acknowledgement of some SEN pupils’ inability to cope, The Green Paper (2011d) did not make a solitary mention of any phrase implying discipline in its 128 page report. Undefined ‘behaviour management’ was the strongest associate term used. Instead it purported “Every child ... identified as having a special educational need deserves our support” (foreword: p.3). Support was mentioned numerous times as the Paper, which is anticipated to become law in September 2014, exuded an ethos of care.

It is apparent the 'minority' were deliberately portrayed differently in accordance with the interests of distinct audiences: when the 'minority' were associated with cited violence in the White Paper (2010a) they were met with ('appropriate') stringent discipline measures; when the 'minority' were identified according to SEN as in the Green Paper (2011b) the coverage elicited fitting notions of concern and support. Each manifestation was attributed with apt provision which satisfied the sensitive requirements of the target audience. Each Paper had a strong central theme which became a pale subsidiary in the corresponding publication. It seems that any explicit strategy endorsing exclusion for pupils with special educational needs, or conversely advocating care and support in response to poor behaviour, was politically unacceptable. As a consequence there appears to have been a deliberate ploy to obscure a definitive transparent identification of the make-up of this significant cohort. The White Paper (2010a) emphasised the behaviour; the Green Paper's (2011d) consultation disassociated with this factor to project concern for the individual.

The collaborative presentations which strategically omitted and selected information, effectively deflected criticism from their proposed policies. The messages are enveloped in persuasive ideology which is hard to detect as they are embedded in language, as common sense givens. As Brookfield (2008: p.41) noted: "On closer examination, however, we see that a degree of deliberation undergirds what appear as accidentally emergent belief systems".

As with the previous Labour Government, approaches which purport a mixture of care and control in support of young people are identified as contradictory rather than complementary (Burton et al. 2009). Absorbing these mixed messages is the teacher though there is no hint of ambiguity in Education Minister, Michael Gove's words: "Teachers have a responsibility to make sure pupils behave and succeed or they will find themselves "in the firing line" (The Independent 13/1/12).

This present research, which is inclusive of SEN pupils' performance within secondary school mixed ability classrooms, appears particularly pertinent in light of analysis of SEN and exclusion statistics. These showed BESD was more prevalent amongst boys than girls (DCSF 09: p.5); from age 12 onwards BESD became the special need for children associated with School Action Plus

(DCSF 2009: Table 9: p.28); the most common point for both boys and girls to be excluded was in year groups 9 and 10 (equivalent to ages 13 - 15); around 53 per cent of all permanent exclusions were of pupils from this age group” (DfE 2011b Tables 3 and 4a). Key to analysis will be whether the relationships I nurture, and the climate I create encourage such students to be self-disciplined when faced with academic challenge.

## **2.5: Pupil resistance to authority**

Within mainstream schools, the organisation of pupils is considered as a contributory, and consistent factor in understanding pupil behaviour. Tomlinson (2001) asserted that the criteria for categorizing children, through setting or streaming, was attached to erroneous ideas of ability which served political ends. For Youdell (2011) the institutional and educator judgments about ‘who’ pupils were, perpetuated the implicit hierarchies and everyday injustices embedded in accepted discourses and organisational arrangements within schools. Hansell & Karweit (1983) claimed children in lower streams were often taught an ‘impoverished’ curriculum, which did not attempt to engage thinking or understanding and was limited to simple drill and practice exercises. Ireson & Hallam (2001) found a worsening of attitudes towards school and schoolwork resulting in progressive alienation (Gamoran & Berends 1987). Usually in smaller classes, in addition to SEN, lower cohorts often contained a disproportionate number of boys, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and in some schools, children from specific ethnic groups (Kutnick et al. 2005; Wiliam & Bartholomew 2004).

Keddie (1973), in her examination of streaming and classroom knowledge, found a link between perceived ability and social class to substantiate a broad focus on labelling. Ball (1981) reported those in lower streams were seen as lacking ability, lazy, and poorly behaved; in contrast to top streams who were viewed as bright, hard-working, and interested. The labelling of pupils by individual teachers according to supposed ability or the conceptualising of obstructive behaviour as deviant, is derived from perceptions of interactions with other people (Becker 1963). Waterhouse (2004: p.69) argued these negative evaluations were constructed against the “boundaries of the ‘normal’ social world of school and classrooms”. The significance of associating teacher’s beliefs to their enactment of role is considered in 2.8.

I maintain that students' sensitivity to implicit judgements may be a powerful influence on self-perception and subsequent performance (Keddie 1971). Richardson & Sing (2011: p.60) argued that pupils with lower formal attainment, had nonetheless "absorbed fully the nature of the meritocratic race in which they were runners". Dweck (2000) stated that self-fulfilling prophecy is integral in affirming a child's negative self-theories contributing to students' lack of self-organisation and the forming of stereotypes (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968). Elliott & Dweck (2005) wrote of proximal motives in which avoidance tactics, through self-handicapping, were deployed to deflect perceived threats which expose the self to others. As most acts were enacted in front of an audience, a second set of proximal motives centred on the individual's presentation to preserve esteem in the eyes of others. In terms of "'trouble-makers' they might well have been expected to 'live up' to their label and behave in a more disruptive fashion" (Swinson & Knight 2007: pp.251-252). Laddish' behaviour was identified by Jackson (2010b), as being akin to group behaviours.

Illustrating the importance of contextual relations, Swinson & Knight (2007: p.241) showed those labelled as disruptive were less likely to be on-task and more likely to 'shout-out' than their peers, however, they were also observed to "behave appropriately in well run lessons, where on-task rates were high for all pupils". I will show later how pupils' perception of the teacher as representative of boundaries is a significant factor in determining students' variable performance. Identifying the adult's qualities, which bring about cooperation rather than resistance, is crucial if the teacher's influence is to subdue a competing sub-culture within the group. Discussed in the context of 'sin-bins' but equally applicable to the pupils amalgamated through lower grouping, Lines (2003) claimed that putting the 'bad guys' together helped to create a negative delinquent group identity amidst mutual aversive role-modelling influences. Earlier, Hargreaves presented a paradox in which subsequent negative labels given by teachers to disruptive members of lower streams were counter-acted by the high status the conduct was afforded by an audience of like-minded peers. Jackson (2010a) argued that pupils fear both academic and social 'failure', whilst Francis (2005) highlighted students' concerns about being unpopular, 'fitting in' and being left out. Reinke & Herman (2002) wrote of the tendency for malcontents to gravitate towards each other to form an anti-social peer group. Social learning

theorists extending Thorndike's work on the 'Law of Effect' (Upton 1983), purported the power of reinforcement in legitimizing contextual behaviour.

My study problematizes conceptions of categorisation in literature to challenge the erroneous stigmatisation of pupils. My work places an emphasis on separating the child from their behaviour. Woods (1979, 1983) expanded on Hargreaves' work (1967), which had concluded that schools contained two distinctive sub-cultures: the conformists and non-conformists. He developed Merton's (1968) typology of adaptations to extend from five categories to eight ranging from compliance to rebellion. Araújo (2005) argued for a need to depart from the polarised conceptions of indiscipline which promoted the view of children as being either disruptive or disrupted. I concur with the view that official documents do so polarise, downplaying both the institutional and contextual dimensions.

Discipline in real classes is much too complex to justify stringent behaviour approaches, designed to address the conduct of a minority, whilst being applied to constrain all. I will explore whether sub-categories are dynamic within mixed-ability classes. In Chapter Five I address the criticism Woods attracted from Furlong (1976) by emphasising that individual pupils, both 'deviant' and 'conformist' may behave differently in diverse contexts. Students in my lessons partook in mixed ability classes having just experienced partition formalised by sets. Within the emergent sub-categories, I was particularly mindful of the minority whose educational experience has been largely defined by perceived low academic ability and indiscipline. I was interested to research whether my methodology might disrupt associate labels they may have absorbed so impacting positively on their behaviour. Woods (1979) did not fully explain why students adopt one particular adaption rather than another. I aim to illuminate the contextual nuances to address this limitation.

A key denominator in determining whether a pupil's conduct is deemed acceptable or not is gauged against adherence to explicit school rules. Raby (2005) used Foucault's (1979) concept of governmentality to contribute to this line of thought. For Foucault (1982) the term government could be defined as the 'conduct of conduct'. Nietzsche (2010) identified the word 'conduct' has specific reference to behaviours and actions and also has particular importance



for the notion of self-discipline. Here it is applied to examine a school's code of conduct as a site of knowledge, which "regulates individuals and the population through a collection of "institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations and tactics" (Foucault 1979: p.20) "of which classroom discipline approaches form a part" (Millei 2007: p.4). My query extends beyond the primary function of rules to create unambiguous boundaries and safety, to consider whether they are used to oppress and victimise pupils. Subsequently I ask if arbitrary rules imposed on students, might provoke acts of resistance which embroil the authority figure employed to uphold 'standards'.

Goodman (2006) argued formalised procedures deeply embedded within the 'context', such as school rules and sanctions, blurred ethical distinctions and were unhelpful to children's moral development. Others have argued to the contrary. The infusion of school rules with elevated moral status was central to Durkheim's (1925/1961) classic work on school discipline. General rules, such as order or silence were depicted as gateway virtues for all learning and mandatory pre-requisites for good learning. Once general rules (Dewey 1954), distanced from the learning task, were justified by school authorities, limits on discretion dissipated as issues such as lateness or chewing automatically incurred a sanction.

Goodman (2006: p.215) illuminated a perspective which was obscured to me as I uncritically enforced policy. "From rules justified by order, it is a small step to rules justified for their own sake". She claimed, if rules were self-justifying; the teacher's task was to exact compliance, discipline became the procedure of punishing perceived disobedience. "Just as the distancing of discipline from learning opens space for moralizing rules, so, too, the distancing of sanctions from rules opens space for moralizing sanctions" (p.217). Rules then were conceptualized as a formative representation of deviant discourse. Often experienced as punitive; punishment as "moral affirmation" (Garland, 1999: p.24), rather than 'crime control', they represented the "rebalancing of moral scales" (Goodman 2006: p.222), yet were employed by schools for non-moral offences.

Uniform 'offences' serve as an exemplar, best illustrated by a high profile case which culminated in the House of Lords making a decision to uphold the school's right to exclude a

Muslim pupil due to her insistence on the right to manifest her religion (Carney & Sinclair 2006). Swain (2002) identified the key role played by clothing as an expression of individual and collective identity, whilst Brunnsma & Rockquemore (1998; 2003) disputed the positive assumptions made between uniform and pupils' behavioural and academic performance. Hattie (2009) described such emphasis as cosmetic or 'coat of paint' reforms which involved the parents, led to more rules and appealed to common sense. The link between uniform and disciplinary action is evident through Field data in Chapter Five.

Adjacent to rules, some researchers, recognised the establishment of school conventions was entwined with the presence of control rituals and complementary resistance rituals. Quantz et al. (2011) presented ritual in schooling as the non-rational, formalized symbolic performance in which everyone played a part. Warnick (2010) considered rituals to be a part of proper authority because they invited students inside, without forcing them inside. Maloney (2000) highlighted the establishment of ritual as early as pre-school. Conversely, Anfara (1997) saw pupil resistance as ritual and liminal experiences. The notion of liminal is discussed in 2.6. Anfara's study examined the collision between student culture and school culture. Amongst the findings which create conditions for resistance, is the school's construction of the pupil as a child (or non-subject) rather than as an emerging adult (subject) indicative of a lack of trust, and the silencing of students' voices. In accordance, McLaren (1986) wrote of the ritual production of conformity and resistance to conformity. He advanced the concept of anti-structure, to interpret the actions of students who traffic in illegitimate symbols and who attempt to deride authority as flexing, as it were, their counter-culture muscles. Durkheim (1893/1964) had equated symbols of ritual with symbols of identity.

Recognising that the interpretation of pupils' acts were largely dependent on context and motive, Goodman (2006: p.220) concluded "conventions without moral valence, without a clear indicator of insolence ... fall into the problem-to-be-solved category, not the wrong-to-be-punished". My action research provides a platform from which to be curious about underlying motives fuelling the behaviour I witnessed. Rather than automatically equate to blame, pupils' resistance to instructions are reconceptualised as students' responses to contextual labels and conditions. That these expressions contravene rules and nominally incur sanctions, ensures

dissatisfying elements of the pupils' educational experience are often left unexamined. Literature aiding the process of reconceptualization must take into consideration not only the context shaping the child's contact with others, but also coverage of their developmental needs and underlying issues around identity.

## **2.6: Pupils' roles and relationships**

I have discussed behaviour control and pupil resistance and now turn to research into how pedagogy can have a positive effect on pupils leading to motivation, enthusiasm and personal growth.

I use Identity theory, originally formulated by Stryker (1968, 1980, 1987; Stryker & Serpe 1982), to facilitate further exploration of the mediatory space between social structure (Burke 2004) and the individual (Stets & Burke 2000). Hogg et al. (1995) explained it is principally a micro-sociological theory purporting the self as being constructed through multiple identities that reside in circumscribed practices. This view invites a consideration of individuals' role-related behaviours within the institutional structure, termed by Illich (1971) as schooling. Role identities are defined as distinct components of self (Stryker 1968, 1980; Stryker & Serpe 1982), self-conceptions that people apply to themselves as a consequence of the structural role positions they occupy (Burke 2004).

In 2.8 below the core theoretical perspectives will be considered in relation to teachers but are initially applied here to students. Ensuing coverage extends beyond pupils' self-identities as individual learners to place emphasis on social identity. As indicated in 2.3 and 2.5, in this capacity conduct is theorised in recognition that the individual is part of a peer group. Considered as part of a collective, I utilize Cooley's (1902), and Mead's (1934) theories regarding the importance of others to inform the social self. The study's second objective is intent on understanding how pupils form and adjust their identities according to organisational structures and situational cues. These factors are presented in Chapter Five to provide context for action research and is present within literature.

It is important to stipulate my study is not restricted to those children categorised as 'disruptive', for they merely form part of a transient sub-category within a dynamic group. Araújo's (2005 p.264) description encompassed Foucault's (1980) notion of power:

"Official and teachers' understandings of indiscipline opened a space for the polarization of perceptions of pupils' behaviour, as being either disruptive or disrupted. However, indiscipline in real classrooms is more fluid than official and teachers' discourses allow. Disruptive pupils are not always disruptive, as those who tend to behave well are not necessarily disrupted or behave well on all occasions. In a given classroom situation it may only be possible to position a couple of pupils at each extreme end of a behaviour spectrum, but most pupils would fall in the middle. Pupils do not merely slip into disruptive or disrupted bodies; rather, discipline is negotiated daily in classrooms through interactions with both teachers and peers".

Within the discourse of teaching-as-usual (Davies & Hunt 1994), each composition contains a number who qualified as a still and docile 'good' pupil (Youdell 2011). Thompson's (2010) exploration of the hegemonic good student challenged polarised descriptors of pupils (Steer 2005). Thompson argued that the vision of the good student is antithetical to the lived experience of students as they too negotiate their positionality within complex power games in secondary schools. As with the 'naughty' child, the 'ideal' pupil (Hempel-Jorgensen 2009) is immersed within competing and contradictory discourses and micro-practices of power.

Juvonen & Cadigan's (2002) research sought to understand the apparent discrepancy between early adolescents' personal values and their social behaviour. Despite holding private beliefs condemning obstructive public behaviour prevalent amongst their age group, such as getting drunk, they found pupils' growing desire to be autonomous from adult control coupled with the need to fit in with peers. This culminated in an affiliation with 'them' and 'us' categories to depict the teacher and pupil roles. Observation of group norm behaviour was interpreted by individuals as indicative of peers' values. An awareness of the difference between this perception and their own values accentuates the child's need for self-presentation. This means

to appear 'cool' to minimise ridicule; and to starve off the fear of rejection. These goals may be achieved through incurring teacher disapproval.

Juvonen & Cadigan (2002) suggested pupils strive for balance in situations of imbalance, or in Burke's (2004) terms, the self-verification process seeks to attain and maintain equilibrium with perceptions and seeks to restore disturbances. Students have two choices, they either alter their private attitude or alter their public behaviour according to the situations they find themselves in. Hence argued Juvonen & Cadigan (2002), we observe students adapting their behaviour depending on their perception of what is expected amongst the peer group.

A second determinate, important for comprehending variable contextual conduct, is the nature of experiential dealings between pupils and individual teachers. The concept of trust deriving from a teacher's authoritative performance is considered key. Richardson & Fallona (2001) related classroom management to manner. By 'manner' in teaching, they referred to a teacher's virtuous conduct or traits of character as played out or revealed within a classroom context (Fenstermacher 1990; 2001). The manner could look very different in different classrooms as it manifests itself through disciplinary approaches encapsulated by the phrase 'tough love'.

Steutel & Spiecker (2000) argued that for pupils to recognise the theoretical authority of their teachers; to accept their practical authority, some form and degree of trust was essential. Trust was defined by Yamagishi (1988) as the general belief in honesty and cooperative intentions of others. Banfield et al. (2006) produced an interesting study exploring the impact of teacher misbehaviour on their credibility amongst pupils. Teacher credibility, was defined as the degree to which the students perceive the teacher to be believable. Three underlying dimensions were identified: teacher incompetence (basic teaching skills), indolence (general disregard e.g. through lateness) and offensiveness. Offensiveness related to the teacher's general tendency to verbally abuse students, such as embarrassing, insulting, or humiliating pupils (Kearney et al. 1991). Whereas Zhang (2007) found incompetence to be the greatest source of demotivation within and across cultures, Banfield et al. (2006) identified teacher offensiveness as having the greatest negative impact on the students' perceptions of teacher trust. By way of affirmation of

these studies, Hallam (2002) found pupils' responses in lower sets tended to be mediated by the perceived quality of the teaching and their relationships with teachers. Demonstrative trust is identified as integral to my success criteria.

Banfield et al. (2006) recognised a limitation of their study was its experimental nature. Advocating future research in a naturalist setting, they pondered if teachers really participate in the behaviours that were depicted in the study. Chapter Four will show me as highly competent, and excessively punctual. The chapter reveals it was when these efficient traits were compromised by pupil behaviour that I generally became offensive and jeopardised the trust that I had built.

Gregory & Ripski (2010) stated the issue of student trust in teacher authority had received little empirical attention, despite scholars, such as Bryk & Schneider (2002) finding many respondents citing that the trust in their new teacher made all the difference for them. Their research with teachers and discipline-referred students, produced results showing that the association between teachers' relational approach to discipline and low student defiance was mediated by students' perceptions of teacher trustworthiness. This was facilitated by staff approaching students as individuals and attempting to learn something about them that is non-academic in nature.

Thompson's (1975) research on secondary school pupils' attitudes to school and teachers reported the importance of qualities such as kindness, fairness and warmth, which were usually judged on the basis of personal interactions. Therefore, if it was considered important for pupils to develop more positive attitudes towards their teachers, it was recommended that teachers were not seen as rather impersonal purveyors of knowledge and administrators of discipline. Thus Bingham (2004) suggested that student cooperation and acceptance of teacher authority was a bidirectional negotiation set within the context of a relationship. Noyes' (2005) review of MacBeath et al.'s (2003: p.8) focus on pupil voice and power, considered that "the basic preconditions for open and purposeful consultation are motivation and trust".

My research addresses two limitations of the study highlighted within Gregory & Ripski's (2010) work. Due to the sample being relatively small (n: 32), they recognised it may not adequately

reflect the effects of a relational approach on behaviour in the classroom. They postulated it may be the case that a relational approach was more predictive of general compliance with teachers' authority rather than active engagement in academic tasks, as was measured by the teacher-reported cooperation scale used in their study. Active engagement in academic tasks may be more related to other factors such as quality of instruction than teacher/pupil relationship, illustrative of educational values rather than personal values. I aim to demonstrate trust in pupils is a key *pre-requisite* to their engagement with learning opportunities. Uitto & Syrjälä's (2008) narrative inquiry of teacher memories concluded that teaching consists of unique moments involving the teacher and his/her pupil(s), and the crucial thing was what the teacher did during these pedagogical moments. They reminded that encounter in the teacher–pupil relationship always involved power, and required one to be caring, intensively present. Uitto & Syrjälä (2008) stated the feeling of safety emanated from trust in the teacher; Montalvo et al.'s (2007) findings suggested that when students liked a teacher, one who respected and trusted them, they experienced motivational and achievement benefits.

It is argued that a lack of trust invited blame. Verkuyten (2002) claimed students were not simply showing disruptive behaviour, rather, they showed subversion in such a way that a legitimate account could be offered if challenged – they forced accountability on the teacher. Disruption, presented as a logical and more or less inevitable consequence of the 'bad' teaching, attributing a lack of order as the teacher's responsibility, and using the notion of consensus ('everybody was talking... nobody listens) enabled individual pupils to present themselves as 'normal' and as not responsible. Carter & Osler (2000) captured something of the resulting exchange, reporting some staff were critical of the students' lack of judgement in knowing how to behave appropriately whilst most pupils felt that they were never trusted to act well. Inevitably, the boundaries were articulated through reference to rules and disciplinary measures.

Gregory & Cornell (2009: p.111) contended that zero tolerance discipline policies were inconsistent with adolescent developmental needs for authoritative, as distinguished from authoritarian, discipline. They concluded:

“Adolescents have developmental needs for both structure and support, albeit in a balanced and moderated form that still permits them a degree of independence and autonomy that reflects their emerging sense of adult identity”.

Pajares (2006) warned how precarious this process was due to pupils’ self-efficacy beliefs held during childhood and adolescence. Drawing on Bandura’s (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, human functioning was viewed as a dynamic interplay between personal, behavioural and environmental influences. Pajares (2006: p.342) stated self-efficacy lay at “the very heart of self-fulfilling prophecy”. Jackson (2003) viewed disruptive incidents as a response to a fear of failure, thus ‘laddishness’ could be viewed as a self-protection strategy (Jackson 2002). Dweck’s Self-Theories (2000) illuminated the association between failure and motivation, conceptions of intelligence (Dweck & Molden 2005) and competence (Schunk & Pajares 2005). Amidst the organisational categorisation, the policies and explicit symbols of mistrust and judgment, Dweck’s (2000) extensive work on young children’s theories about goodness and badness suggested some children, in the face of failure or criticism, felt their entire selves were evaluated. Expressions of helplessness and expectations of punishment occurred as they internalised and personalised perceived judgment, leaving them feeling vulnerable.

I seek to make a contribution to knowledge demonstrating how the balance between ethical control and care might be negotiated. Rather than offering solutions, McCreedy & Soloway (2010) advocated the development of context-specific strategies for classroom management. They identified most challenging behaviours were adaptive in nature, as were teachers’ strategies for intervening through building trusting relationships with students. Adaptive problems were defined as ones that cannot be solved by experts. It was argued the solutions lay not in technical answers, but rather in people themselves. Citing Heifetz (1996), most social problems, like discipline gaps, were adaptive - to solve them involved the difficult process of changing teachers’ values, beliefs, habits, and ways of working. Consequently, I draw on literature in 2.8. For me, an engagement with literature advancing the perspectives of critical pedagogy and liminality was integral to my process of reconceptualization. In the next section I present conceptions of macro and micro influences on pedagogy and classroom interactions.



## **2.7: Pedagogy for Personal Growth**

Critical pedagogy sees radical pedagogy in the broadest terms as a moral and political practice. Pedagogy is “political because it is inherently productive and directive rather than neutral or objective” (Giroux 2011: Kindle-mark: 128). Critical pedagogy endeavours to expose existing unhelpful and unfair power structures; it interrogates where control lies over the conditions for the production of knowledge, values, and classroom practices (Giroux 2011). Carr & Kemmis (1986), who applied critical pedagogy to action research, earlier suggested that when the moral dimension of education is suppressed, schooling is reduced to instruction, training or indoctrination. Freire (1993) asserted that the institution of schooling actively oppresses young people. Illuminating arguments presented in 2.3, Giroux (2011) claimed young people are reduced to ‘cheerful robots’ through a transmission model, which fills children with information and skills, deemed to be useful to them and society. In accordance with Freire (1993: p.33) pupils are subtly programmed to conform to the “logic of the system”. This is in reference to a capitalist system of commodity production involving not just competitive product markets, but the commodification of labour power (Giddens 1991). As Gordon Brown stated in his budget speech of 1999, “Children are 20 per cent of the British people, but 100 per cent of Britain’s future” (Pollard & Triggs 2000: p.56); they represent the country’s ‘human capital’ (DfE 2010a: p.3). Ball (2013) identified notions of intelligence, testing and statistics, as a ‘combinatory’ practice successfully normalising or presenting reality, in terms of quantifiable measures. Indeed, Stobart (2008) suggested assessment goes beyond the primary function which creates categories; individuals are made calculable and subject to the “power of the single number” (Rose 1999: p.214). Reality is thus rendered as a field of government (Ball 2013). In reference to concerns about standardized testing, Barrier-Ferreira (2008) posed the question: Are we producing commodities or educating children?

My work makes a commitment to realising the latter. I subscribe to Mayes’ (2010: p.191) view that shifts in power are organic or gradual, “coming from the bottom up and dependent on the micro-level actions of ordinary people”. I argue that when pupils are conceived as numbers, relationships are destroyed. Recognising the value of anthropological theory used in an

educational context, I draw on Turner's (1964) notion of liminality to emphasise the vibrancy and vulnerability of the individual as I question the propensity to punish.

Originally described by Van Gennep (1960), Pierce (2007) explained that liminality derives from the Latin *limen* meaning 'threshold'. Often used as a psychological term (Conroy & de Ruyter 2008), it refers to a strange state where one is betwixt and between. It refers to a phase in which "liminal entities are neither here nor there" (Turner 1969: pp.94–95). The pupils in my study have passed through the transient experience of departure from primary school, yet are not yet adults. Davies (1982) noted an ambivalence towards children – teachers wanting them to act like adults in one sense - yet to be accepted they must be like children, for they were seen as subordinate. The paradox is illustrative of an interesting inconsistent feature of adults' attitudes towards children. Bigger (forthcoming: p.8) suggested "Prolonging inappropriate models of childhood to the end of compulsory school may be contributing to dysfunctions we can observe in secondary schooling".

My engagement with pupils occurs whilst they negotiate the developmental phase encompassing puberty, denoting the transition from childhood to adulthood whilst devoid of any formal recognition offered through an acknowledged rite of passage. Driver (1991) suggested the poverty of ritual in modern societies was frequently blamed for feelings of alienation and the demise of community, whilst Moffitt (1993) identified young people in particular as suffering from the lack of clearly demarcated rituals for achieving an adult status. It is in this context early adolescence might be regarded as occupying the crux of an in-between stage in which children vied for status amongst peers whilst testing the boundaries (Elton 1989). It is with interest I note exclusions involving pupils with BESD, cited earlier in 2.4, peak during this developmental period. Belk (1997) described boundaries or borders as liminal spaces where traditional rules did not apply, where the 'normal' state was suspended or negated. Barbieri (1978: p.506) argued that "young people need to rebel, and they need to progress from childish gullibility, through disillusionment and doubt, to adult discernment". In accordance to my own reflection of rebellion against specific teachers documented in 6.7.4, Anfara (1999: p.3) concluded "school can provide a sanctuary or "space" where students can

"safely" test and challenge the values of their society". Conroy & de Ruyter (2008: p.5) drew on Turner (1969) to point out an essential feature of liminality is its lack of fixity or permanence:

"It is not and cannot be a fixed space ... those in the liminal space find themselves drawn together in bonds of fellowship or '*communitas*,' precisely because they have equal status, and therefore no status".

Turner coined *communitas* as ritual-as-social-drama, a liminal arena in which the powerlessness needed to engage in positive anti-structural activities (Bigger 2009b). Bigger (forthcoming: p.6) explained *communitas* as meaning behaviour which promotes community, ensuring that:

"the welfare of individuals took precedence over structure, status and authority. Where structure and authority is a straitjacket, ordinary people do not have a voice and are not free to be involved".

This dynamic process towards self-governance Turner (1974) called *processual*. In regards to authority, it denoted "not a transitional activity but a transitional state in which more responsibility is given to the young person who is seen as a young adult and not a child" (Bigger forthcoming: p.9). The focus on adolescence raises questions about how a society moves young people from childhood to adulthood with dignity. I view myself as integral to this process.

I conceive this collective state to be significant to a class' positive relationship with a teacher whose de facto authority (defined forthwith) is accepted; my pedagogical approach encompasses Turner's (1986: p.42) expanding definition that "liminality can perhaps be described as a fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities". I do this by moving away from my established directive style to embrace Turner's concept of pedagogical performance. Here, with increased autonomy, pupils engage imaginatively with a different world view as schemes of work invite exploration of character roles. Conroy & de Ruyter (2008: p.6) endorsed the potential of this approach to enable pupils to engage and explore "insights to be gleaned from the periphery". An exemplar is offered in Appendix 6F.

Although Conroy & de Ruyter (2008) argued that schools had an important role to play in cultivating a sense of the liminal, they were aware that contemporary educational policy

remains at odds with this approach. Regardless, my study takes steps to “enable students to adopt critical positions themselves” (Conroy 2004: p.60), by offering experiences and perspectives that challenge the status quo. All the while mindful of “spontaneous and unexpected moments that arise in the classroom [for these] emergent experiences and conversations offer teachers and students possible encounters with the liminal” (Caron 2006: p.380). In Turner’s view, “the idea that ritual is transformative ... social drama [is] not only functional but *eufunctional* – viz. working for good” (Bigger 2009: p.4). For some teachers, the idea of greater pupil autonomy is equated with conceptions of disorder, which in turn suggests the need for disciplinary action.

## **2.8: The teacher as part of the problem/solution**

Classroom disruption is normally understood to mean that disturbances to learning come from difficult pupils; this section will explore circumstances in which the teacher is one of the disruptive elements. Critical Theory (and Critical Pedagogy) highlights systemic unfairness which, as we have seen, can provoke pupil reaction and resistance. The examination of constructs contributing to professional identity is at the core of this section. I will critique my assertion that many teachers unwittingly adopt a default position which makes them susceptible to accepting the disciplinary discourse defined in this chapter as authoritarianism. First, I draw on literature which suggests teachers become embroiled in the aims and norms of the system as they fulfil their defined role. I then seek to decipher aspects of performance, and underlying attributes which lure teachers into being complicit to the problems associated with classroom contestation. These were highlighted in 2.1-2.5. Finally, I conclude by reconceptualising the notion of authority to direct my attempts to contribute towards a ‘solution’. Although the limitations of my work fall short of Illich’s (1971) radical proposals to de-school society, and Holt’s (1964b) notion of un-schooling, I argue my approach can enable staff to meet the challenges presented in 2.6 and 2.7.

Examining the potential impact of teachers’ day-to-day language in classroom management, Payne-Woolridge’s (2010) research utilised Brown & Levinson’s (1987) model of politeness. Capturing something of my performance prior to research, the model begins from the notion of

face, defined as 'the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself' (Brown & Levinson 1987 p.61). However, they found 86% of utterances were recorded as threats to face. This means that a greater proportion of behaviour-oriented utterances had involved threats to pupils' face rather than face enhancing (there is no face-neutral). Bakhtin (1981) advanced the notion of dialogic pedagogy to address this tendency. I subscribed to his emphasis on attaining "psychological and sociolinguistic insights into the communicative exchange between the individuals in the classroom" (McAuley 2013: p.2).

Payne-Woolridge's (2010) work suggested that positive enhancements to face relate more to task than to behaviour issues. Porter (2006) attributed the distinction between teachers' inclination to view academic errors as accidental, so signalling the need to help, and behavioural errors as deliberate, prompting punishment, could be found in consideration of values. Identifying personal values with preferences, such as a desire for quiet, it was stated only professional values pertaining to directions such as, *pupils should be considerate to each other*, could be taught. The latter was considered to have intrinsic value, and therefore more legitimate than instrumental values such as a demand for silence, which could become an end in itself. I further critique the significance of values imminently. Bakhtin's (1981) criticism of excessive monologism in which knowledge is transmitted (Matusov 2007) illuminates a typical exchange instigated by the teacher which becomes unnecessarily problematic. Indicative of prominent educational discourse, Lodge's (2001) study of language used by teachers who professed an interest in learning, found the word 'learning' was used only two percent of the time in comparison to 98 percent quantifying references to the term 'work'. Wolfe & Alexander (2008) argued patterns of interaction are deeply habituated in teachers' consciousness, and are tied to culture and history (Alexander 2001). "For Bakhtin dialogic interaction forms the basis of an ethical philosophy in itself" (Bowers 2007: p.268).

The capacity for discernment is aided by Berne's (1964) Transactional Analysis framework which highlights the subtle distinction between overt and covert communication to recognise the incongruence between what is said socially and the underlying psychological meaning often encapsulated in tone or expression. These define ulterior transactions. This theory is developed in Chapter Three and applied in Chapter Six as I sought to decipher the verbal and non-verbal

exchanges inherent within the dynamic classroom. Analysis of my own contribution to communication patterns is undertaken through Temple's Index of Functional Fluency (TIFF) documented fully in Chapter Six (Temple 1999).

Intent on identifying the drivers (Barrow et al. 2002) behind the inclination for staff to subvert classroom relations through draconian measures, I seek to understand the prevalence of traits such as strictness in teachers' performance. I am particularly interested in the internal factors which are integral to understanding sources of incongruity within the teacher's persona – aspects which impeded my ability to function in accordance with my purported intensions as an educator. Argyris & Schon (1975) referred to 'governing variables' to denote a person's psychological 'settings'. These, they argued, determined whether a teacher's espoused theories were likely to be compatible with their observable practice or action. Through this study, these became identified with the notion of democratic education (starting with Dewey 1916/2008), enabling the voice of the pupil, and encouraging participation by giving pupils the freedom to invent their learning. These aspects of my research are documented in 6.9.1.

Here, my review of literature considers how values, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions infuse professional identity and unconsciously prevent teachers from relinquishing degrees of control in order to follow suit. Aquino et al. (2011) showed how situational cues can subordinate one's moral identity. Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2007: p.272) suggested the prevailing values of the institution, which teachers must endure, tend to have 'greater pragmatic value' than their own set of values, the "values that comprise their moral and spiritual selves". Such interactions are integral to the dilemmas of schooling. They represent ambiguities that reside in the situation, in the individual, and, as I reiterate later, in the larger society (Berlak & Berlak 1981).

Recognising the diversity of meaning within the term 'values', Sunley & Locke (2010) explored UK secondary teachers' professional values to identify any tensions between the personal values of teachers and organisational values of the schools reflected in professional practice. These twin aspects were identified as being integral to the notion of professional identity. They found little empirical research of values that secondary teachers hold, and how these fit with the organisational values of the schools in which they worked. Hay Group (2004) showed this

discrepancy is a key determinate of organisational culture. Clandinin & Connelly (2003: p.144) coined the phrase “personal to the personal in context” to describe the shift from studying teachers’ values per se, to teachers’ values being subject to those of the school. Aspin & Chapman (2007: p.38) argued that values clarification in itself was not enough, values needed to lead to implementation, or what he termed ‘dispositions to act’. This study details my personal struggle to address the incongruity between my espoused theories and expectant conduct as stipulated by policy when acting as a representative of the school.

Fang (1996) argued that since Jackson's (1968) classic book, ‘Life in Classrooms’ described the mental constructs and processes that underlie teacher behaviour, subsequent researchers have noted that the complexities of classroom life could constrain teachers' abilities to attend to their beliefs and provide instruction which aligned with their theoretical beliefs (Roehler & Duffy 1991). This study addresses two factors that Fang (1996) considered key. First, the suggestion that contextual factors can have powerful influences on teachers' beliefs and, consequently affect their classroom practice, and secondly, a contribution to what Shulman (1986) referred to as 'the missing paradigm' in the research on teaching: an exploration of 'Where teacher explanations come from.'

Rather than question teachers’ psychological default settings, a cursory search confirms many providers offering Continuing Professional Development (CPD) focus on strategies and ‘behaviour management’ techniques (National Teacher Enquiry Network 2013) (NTEN). My experience suggests this is often insufficient to sustain change. The discrepancy between cognitive acceptance of knowledge and its consistent application is apparent in literature. A study of teachers' democratic and efficacy beliefs and their styles of coping with behavioural problems of pupils with special needs, indicated a gap between teachers’ hypothetical knowledge and their applications of this knowledge in classroom situations (Almog & Shechtman 2007). In discussion they considered the conclusions of researchers who suggested the use of restrictive approaches as a solution to behavioural problems stemmed from insufficient knowledge, as well as additional factors such as a lack of experience, skills, time and resources (Elliot et al. 1984). However, Almog & Shechtman’s (2007) data, collected during interviews, showed that teachers *did* have sufficient knowledge regarding helpful approaches,

but they did not use this knowledge in real classroom situations. This is in accordance with my experience of training colleagues detailed in Chapter Four. Yet Steer (2005: p.38) identified that “The knowledge and skills of staff are the single most important factor in promoting good behaviour”. Berlak & Berlak (1981) claimed the inherent contradictions and dilemmas within schooling processes were in a state of constant flux which was internalised by the teacher. I believe this explanation qualifies why knowledge and skills are sometimes rendered impotent in the face of challenge. To illustrate I refer again to discrepant references to skills as presented in coexisting Government documents in section 2.4. These demonstrate the philosophical and operational dilemmas staff face in meeting simultaneous disciplinary and academic standards alongside pastoral care.

Extending coverage of earlier themes in this review, the formation of perspectives is identified as key in determining the nature of relationships facilitated by the classroom leader. Ben-Yehuda et al.’s (2010) examination of the beliefs, practices and characteristics of teachers who have been successful in promoting the social integration of special needs students, found successful teachers attributed the social and academic progress of included students to demonstrative skills, abilities and activities. On the other hand unsuccessful teachers believed that students’ progress, depended on external factors to their teaching and support, i.e. on pupil effort. My own experience challenges the appropriateness of these evaluative terms. Previously I fluctuated between the two traits – attributing achievement to skills, yet interpreting incidents of non-engagement as evidence of a deficit student motivation. The latter was more likely to induce discipline measures rather than sympathy, patience or understanding. I show in Chapter Six that I have come to appreciate, in accordance to Dweck’s (2000) work, that a combination of strategy and effort are key ingredients for pupils to overcome negative behavioural responses to the prospect of failure.

Relevant to debate around setting and gender, Auwarter & Aruguete’s (2008) findings showed that teachers are likely to develop negative attitudes toward low-socioeconomic status pupils in general, but especially boys. Lambert & Miller’s (2010) study suggested teachers were more likely to define pupil behaviour in accordance to entrenched beliefs and perceptions rather than attribute to situational variables (Ross 1977). Other researchers have used social cognitive



theory to probe teachers' self-efficacy, defined as beliefs about one's ability to successfully produce a desired outcome (Bandura 1997). Poulou & Norwich (2002) revealed that teachers' causal attributions predicted their emotional and cognitive responses, which in turn predicted their intentional behaviour. My study will show these have potential to negatively impact on the teacher's sense of well-being and classroom relationships.

Wright (2009) argued that a belief that pupils' behaviour should be normalised and controlled, without understanding the complexities behind the behaviour, could disturb teachers' equilibrium inducing feelings of stress. Although research indicated that the sources of teacher stress were not clear, pupil misconduct or disruptive behaviour was included amongst the variables that have been found to be significant (Kyriacou 1987; Borg 1990; Wilhelm et al. 2000; Botwinik 2007; Axup & Gersch 2008). Beyond a broad definition of stress as negative emotions being triggered by the teacher's perception which constituted "a threat to their self-esteem or well-being" (Kyriacou 2001: p.28), Kyriacou (1987) identified tension, frustration, anxiety, anger and depression as significant problems. Friedman (2006) added feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and embarrassment. The correlated terms portray an inherent tension which impacts upon the psychological well-being of the adult charged with curbing misbehaviour, as their authority is periodically contested. Tsouloupas et al.'s (2010) exploration of teachers' beliefs in response to pupil challenge, concluded future studies would need to find other emotion regulation or self-efficacy strategies to effectively handle student misbehaviour.

A preliminary focus is offered by Reddy (1997; 2001) who used the term 'emotives' to refer to emotional gestures and utterances, citing their capacity to alter the states of the speakers. Zembylas (2003) argued that, repeated over years, these could have profound effects on the teacher's identity and relationships, resulting in a feeling of burn out. Wright (2009) described teachers creating a 'split-self' in which they adopt a different persona which, distances them from the emotional response that troubled children 'transfer'. Sutton et al. (2009) reported a dearth in good research evidence on the appropriate balance of positive and negative emotions for teachers in various contexts or on the most effective strategies to use to manage emotions. I make a contribution to this knowledge, showing this is a process rather than an event.

### **2.8.1: Professional identity**

Beijaard (1995) found that the more personal and professional selves are integrated into teacher identity, the more this is likely to be affected by positive or negative pupil attitudes and behaviour. My role ensured I progressively became disturbed by the latter. It is the apparent incongruity between these two facets of self which is encapsulated for me by Whitehead's (1989) phrase 'living contradiction'. The foundation I present here draws on James (1890), and Mead's (1934) notion of a reflexive self: that 'I' the knower, can interrogate the 'me' as object. That I am able to look back on that which is known through the roles I have taken on (Gross 2009). Specifically, my identity, in my role as leader before and after action research, is subject to examination through this study (Lührmann & Eberl 2007).

It is argued such self-definitions determine the nature of micro behaviours the teacher habitually performs (Hay McBer 2000). This focus constitutes my professional identity. I am mindful that some researchers, such as Nias (1996) and Bucholtz & Hall (2005) argued that teachers have a relatively stable identity rooted in core sets of values, beliefs and practices. Through the process of this literature review I have come to subscribe to Cooper & Olson's (1996) emphasis that professional identity is multifaceted - that historical, sociological, psychological, and cultural factors may all influence one's sense of self as a teacher. In addition, Reynolds (1996) advanced the importance of the contextual, affirmed by Olsen (2008: p.139) who suggested:

"[Identity is] an ever-changing construct... that becomes inter-twined inside the flow of activity as a teacher simultaneously reacts to and negotiates given contexts and human relationships at given moments".

Mishler (1999: p.8) wrote of many sub-identities that may conflict or align with each other which is expressed as a chorus of voices, "not just as the tenor or soprano soloist". Drawing on Gee & Crawford's (1998) view that social setting determines relationships between the different identities, Beigaard et al. (2004) concluded the better the relationships between identities, the better the chorus of voices sounds. I believe this metaphor to be consistent with

my notion of authenticity. Highlighting potential discrepancy, referring specifically to 'professional identity', Ball (1972):

“usefully separates situated from substantive identity. He views the situated identity of a person as a malleable presentation of self that differs according to specific definitions of situations (e.g. within schools) and the more stable, core presentation of self that is fundamental to how a person thinks about himself or herself” (Day et al. 2006: p.603).

### **2.8.2: Solution**

I realised my own perceptions became increasingly entwined with status and authority to suppress any inkling of resistance to stated rules. Although I take definitive steps in Chapter Six to distance myself from further contributing to the problems I associate with authoritarianism, wary of being perceived as offering 'the' answer, I take only tentative steps towards suggesting a 'solution'. It is clear advocated high profile approaches such as the Assertive Discipline package (Canter 2000) or Taylor's 'behaviour checklist' (DfE 2011e) are wholly inadequate, due to the complexities inherent within the problem I address. Likewise simplistic approaches are insufficient for my study, for I am acutely aware that the underlying issues perpetuating the problem, manifesting as classroom contestation, are entrenched within the schooling system. I can reject much of what held me, yet I have to continue to work within its constraints. This for me limits the notion of solution to my unique contribution; I am restricted to describing a process rather than a definitive outcome. The caveat also provides my research with a sense of realism. Consequently, I initially seek hints from literature to inform my journey, and then conclude by situating my work within the extensive context I have critiqued, so to give perspective to my contribution.

Offering a different perspective on power from Foucault (1980), Palmer (1997: p.20) argued that in a “culture of objectification and technique we often confuse authority with power, but the two are not the same. Power works from the outside in, but authority works from the inside out”. Warnock (1989) asserted that teachers may be given authority, but the de facto, or exercise of authority must ultimately depend on the person who exercised it.

Whilst Warnock (1989: p.74) was concerned with the individual teacher's personal ability, competence, knowledge, or status, she hinted at something deeper; something intangible: "He is the author. He must possess his own 'auctoritas', or the delegation of authority to him will simply not work: it will be empty". Palmer (1997: p.20) concurred to contribute to my notion of authenticity:

"External tools of power have occasional utility in teaching, but they are no substitute for authority, the authority that comes from the teacher's inner life. The clue is in the word it- self, which has "author" at its core. Authority is granted to people who are perceived as "authoring" their own words, their own actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from their own hearts. When teachers depend on the coercive powers of law or technique, they have no authority at all".

Wilson (1990) stated, in reply to Warnock, that 'values' ought not to be personal or political, but educational in nature, as suggested by Porter (2006) and addressed in Chapter Three. Gadamer's (1975: p.248) comments on de facto authority are applied to the teaching context to add a second point which shifts the emphasis from the individual teacher to their interactions with pupils. He wrote "authority cannot actually be bestowed but is acquired and must be acquired if someone is to lay claim to it". Authority, therefore, rested on recognition. It was a voluntary acknowledgement - practical authority was only legitimate if pupils voluntarily put themselves in the hands of the educator (Steutel & Spiecker 2000). Consistent with literature cited in 2.6, Hawkins (2002) posited the connection between authority and relationship as residing in the human experience of trust. Dunbar & Taylor (1982) referred to this as legitimate, or informal authority, which in light of the limitations of formal authority is dependent on and granted by the consent of the students. I contribute to knowledge concerning this implicit exchange as pupils identify situational cues as initial indicators of the incumbent's authority.

Through this study I partake in 'anti-structure' which in its primary sense puts pressure on structure, championing a "'bottom up', multi-perspectival, democratic [struggle for change]" (Bigger 2009: p.4). However, its foundation is dependent on dismantling my psychological traits which fuel my behaviour when in role. Woods & Carlyle (2002) stated although notions of 'self'

and personal identity are used in educational research and theory, a critical engagement with the cognitive and emotional 'self' has been relatively rare in individual teachers. I make a contribution to this knowledge. This focus pits itself against the essence of the school culture hosting my research, as well as against the broad political climate defined in earlier sections.

In recognition that any form of educational activity cannot be said to operate in a vacuum (Adams 2011), I align myself with Youdell (2011) to provide context for the cited literature depicting the organisational and relational aspects which portray schooling. She identified the notion of discourse as a lens in which to understand how education comes to be understood as a particular sort of activity with particular ends. As with Freire (1993) I realised I was naïve. Through this broad canvass I began to appreciate critical perspectives which elucidated the insular world I experienced. Deleuze & Guattari's (1983; 2008) idea of assemblages helps to:

"conceptualize the complex terrain of education and the ways that economy and politics, policy, organisational arrangements, knowledge, subjectivity, pedagogy, everyday practices and feelings come together to form the education assemblage [to appreciate] the various orders of the education assemblage are manifest in a single event or encounter" (Youdell 2011: pp.2-3).

The focus which represents the crux of my research finds context in Giroux (2011: Kindle-mark: 2046):

"Educational work at its best represents a response to questions and issues posed by the tensions and contradictions of the broader society; it is an attempt to understand and intervene in specific problems that emanate from those sites that people concretely inhabit and in which they actually live out their lives and everyday existence. Teaching in this sense becomes performative and contextual, and it highlights considerations of power, politics and ethics fundamental to any form of teacher-student-text relation".

Nias' (1989: p.65) descriptor of teachers living with tension, dilemma and contradiction, concluded "those who claim that they can be themselves in and through work ... are signalling that they have learned to live not just with stress but with paradox". Youdell (2011: p.143), in her concluding chapter 'Re-imagining education', wrote of disciplinary power as contingent and

circulatory, which was produced and productive - above all a classroom “is a space where trust circulates”. This encapsulates the intention of Chapter Six.

I describe my susceptibility to adhere daily to well-established rituals, initially absorbed in my formative years: to uncritically embrace discourses, continuously striving for the next quantifiable validation, had left me in a vulnerable and liminal state. Performativity works best when we come to want for ourselves what is wanted from us (Ball 2013). I believe, through my allegiance to notions of professionalism, I have been habitually deprived of experiencing myself and my pupils in the ‘moment’. I argue this remoteness in relationship is apparent in interactions described throughout Chapters Four and Five.

In accordance, working towards a ‘solution’, in Chapter Six I aim to show that being psychologically ‘present’ enables one to have ‘presence’. As Buber (1937/58: Kindle-mark: 255) defined: “The present arises only in virtue of the fact that the Thou becomes present”. I relate this aspect as fundamental to one’s ability to be authentic, which I argue is the foundation for de facto authority - an authority which elicits reciprocal trust, mindful not to suppress the voices of my pupils.

Burris’ (2005: pp.13-14) articulation of ‘classroom management’ resonates with my intention:

“Rather than putting their energy into forcing obedience and learning, teachers can, rather, hone their observational skills so as to more sensitively enact relationships with their students (and structure their classrooms so as to afford themselves time to observe); teachers can practice the art of being authentically “present” (Rodgers 2002) to students, experiencing and noticing themselves moment-to-moment and accepting and working with their students’ moment-to-moment experiences in turn; teachers can earn their students’ respect and trust through a history of consistent, thoughtful interactions, working through resistance and other negative emotions to mutually satisfying co-operation; teachers can design activities that facilitate students’ engagement with content and with each other”.

Critical of the system’s organisational structure, cynical of prominent discourses, and concerned for those colleagues who diligently strive to serve children, I am intent on contributing to

participants' emotional health (Griffin & Tyrrell 2003). I aim to build on these concepts of 'presence', authenticity and trust as foundations for authority as I seek to research *whether non-authoritarian teacher approaches can steer pupils to contribute towards a well-ordered class dynamic.*

## Chapter Three: Methodology and Methods

### 3.1: Action Research

My study is constructed using participant action research in the qualitative tradition. It examines the qualities of things; analysing words instead of quantitative measurements. My work aims to understand human action within natural contexts (Carter 2007) such as schools. The inquiry interprets experiences pertinent to the quality of pedagogy. The research is defined by critical relations between adults and children in the classroom. The established roles of teachers and pupils invite a critique of social power and powerlessness. To emphasise my process of reconceptualization I refer to Schostak & Schostak's (2008) text to contrast power. They used the Latin terms *potestas* (authoritarian) and *potentias* which refers to potential, as in personal empowerment.

In subscribing to the latter, my research has moral implications (Clough & Nutbrown 2012) in that I generate conditions to include the voices of the excluded. This represents the ethical and political justification for action as I challenge the 'normal' sequences and relations imposed by power (Schostak & Schostak 2008). Agreeing with Nussbaum (1990), Elliott (2006: p.181) considered the "contemporary conceptions of practical rationality in 'almost every area of social life' are so dominated by the 'science of measurement' [that those with an interest in education – be they researchers, politicians, administrators or teachers] ... are in danger of losing sight of the Aristotelian conception of practical rationality as *phronesis*". The term, defined as "the disposition to act truly and rightly" (Carr & Kemmis 1986: p.34), found association with Elliott's (2006: p.169) definition of educational practice:

"What makes research *educational* is its practical intention to realise educational values in action. It addresses practical questions and in doing so cannot avoid taking an evaluative stance on the aims of education. On this view it is a form of enquiry aimed at the formation of judgements and practical insights. Since these are rooted in everyday experiences of education practitioners educational research constitutes a form of common sense enquiry rather than a science".



### 3.2: Auto-ethnography

Pedagogic practice exhibited by other people can be researched ethnographically, linking observations with interviews, but researching one's own practice needs a different approach. Observing oneself ethnographically is more problematic than observing others. There is a sizable literature on auto-ethnography today, but it varies from self-indulgent and uncritical autobiographic journaling to models with greater robustness. The practitioner researcher shares some similarities with the outsider ethnographer, taking detailed notes of observations. Each have to be keenly aware of their own reflexivity, and be aware that a range of voices or perspectives, some dominant and some silenced, need to be listened to. This notion of platform is not confined to pupils in my study; it is inclusive of teachers' accounts. Richmond & Smith (1990: p.296) commented: "Researchers often dismiss practitioner evidence as anecdotal and therefore of no scientific value". However, practitioner action research is well established and generally accepted as an effective form of professional development. Wood et al. (2007: p.74) ratified the enduring priority for me to convert my research into Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for colleagues: "The purpose of action research is not to make abstract knowledge available to a select few (academia) but to encourage practical knowing embodied in everyday action". Elliott (2006: p.171) concurred stating why this requirement is credible if research is to be of any use to practitioners:

"Teachers tend to ignore the theories produced by researchers on the grounds that they are practically irrelevant. They cannot connect them with their ordinary common sense experience".

I aim to deconstruct the power structures which I argue, uncritically shape and reinforce the nature of experience for those serving in classrooms. Ethnography describes a state of affairs that exists, but my research goes beyond this in setting out an action for change. Critical ethnography is defined as "conventional ethnography with a political purpose" (Thomas 2003: p.4); it disrupts the status quo and "challenges taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to

light underlying and obscure operations of power and control” (Soyini-Madison 2005: p.5). The initial description of the state of affairs is set out in the introduction, the early sections of the literature review, and detailed in Chapter Four as a reconnaissance to decide what needs to change, and why. This leads to an action plan which is step by step carried out. Fielding criticisms from advocates of “evocative auto-ethnography”, such as Denzin (2006), and Ellis & Bochner (2006), Anderson (2006b) argued the merits of analytic auto-ethnography. Disputing an alleged attack on alternative, introspective and creative forms of auto-ethnography, Anderson (2006a: p.379) had proposed features pertinent to my approach. The first requirement requires that the “researcher is a complete member in the social world under study”; in Merton’s (1988: p.18) terms I become “the ultimate participant in a dual participant-observer role”. Thus my research design is action research; and since it involves others (staff and pupils) alongside me in the action, it is a participatory action research (PAR).

Action Research (AR) to improve practice is now common in educational research (Reason & Bradbury, 2006; Elliott, 2006, Cohen et al. 2007). AR began with Kurt Lewin (1951) whose change process of ‘freeze-unfreeze-refreeze’ encouraged institutional development. Schostak & Schostak’s (2008: p.240) concept of radical methodology used the terms ‘deconstruct-collapse-reconfigure’ so to “include the excluded”. There are different conceptions of AR exemplified by the subtleties of definitions. My use of AR incorporates a philosophical stance aligning myself with Kemmis & McTaggart (1992), who stated that AR is concerned equally with changing individuals, as well as the culture of the groups to which they belong. Previously they had offered a definition:

“Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social and educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out” (1988: p.5).

### 3.3: Broad Description of the Study's Action Research

The 'action' I engaged in was to teach and operate in school in a non-authoritarian manner, after a professional career dominated by authoritarianism. I kept in mind the central research question I wished to address: ***'Can non-authoritarian teachers contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils?'***

Through AR I sought to investigate the power dynamic in the classroom. I asked pupils about their experiences within school. I wanted to present an alternative less-authoritarian ethos to see if this would help pupils to flourish. This meant a total change in my method of teaching. I was aware of Cohen et al.'s (2007a: p.30) critique that the emancipatory claims of action research "might be over-optimistic in a world where power is often through statute... the reality of political power seldom extends to teachers [that it] has little effect on the real locus of power". However, this did not distract from my individual contribution as I re-aligned my stated values and took responsibility for my influence. My thesis presents an in-school and in-classroom action research, exploring the tension between the freedom of the individual and the demands of operating in a community structure (Schostak & Schostak 2008).

The scrutiny of pupils' broader experience of school provided context for comparing the relationships I shared with them when they converged for one hour per week to form my classes. Here I sought to better understand the reciprocal nature of classroom relationships – assessing the impact they had on me and the influence I had on them - I sought to initiate and sustain change. There was no precise AR model to guide the multi-dimensional aspects of this specific study so I have worked within Kemmis & McTaggart's (1988) broad definition and taken the opportunity to describe and define my construction.

My articulation of AR was theorized using a range of linked perspectives signified by the word 'critical'. Alongside the critical AR pioneered by Carr & Kemmis (1986), I drew on the Participatory AR of Wicks et al. (2008). This emphasis demanded that the research activity was communal-planned and articulated by the researcher, certainly, but researching with others (including pupils) rather than seeing them as research subjects. The research collaboration

extended to colleagues who offered further insight to my areas of enquiry. I concur with Reason (1999: p.208) who states: “Good research is research *with* people, rather than *on* people” (original emphasis).

### **3.3.1: Critical AR and Critical Pedagogy**

Carr & Kemmis (1986) defined beneficial change by using Critical Theory associated with the Frankfurt School (that is, research critiquing social attitudes and therefore espousing emancipation and social justice). “The action researcher attempts to discover how situations are constrained by ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ conditions, and to explore how both kinds of conditions can be changed” (p.183). Critical theory invited a questioning of, rather than an acceptance of the status quo; an interrogation of the social construction of knowledge; an examination of how power is produced and reproduced through discourse in order to serve ideological interests (Cohen et al. 2007). In contrast to my original intention to make my rational ‘effective’ practice even more efficient, I now sought to transform it. The aspects which inform the theorization of my work are qualified in following sections.

Using Wicks et al.’s (2008) term, the ‘moments’ which captured my interest were those which evoked contemplation so enabling significant meanings to emerge. They derived from the experience of sharing space with groups of pupils who were compelled to report to my room as part of their fragmented experience of curriculum subjects. In the literature review these significant ‘moments’ were identified through the concept of ‘authentic presence’. I hoped these associations would provide a platform to demonstrate my convictions having conceptualized an alternative to my allegiance to control and dogmatic prescription. However, out of necessity, and in the interest of balance, I also document ‘moments’ which lead to a slow and deliberate introspection of obstructive thoughts, raw, reactionary emotions, and incessant feelings. These internal aspects implored me to revert to a persona which allowed me to dominate dissenting individuals and impose instant order to acute situations.

On a more mundane level, my previous uncritical acceptance of undemocratic, institutionally assigned power to frame classroom relations, and my mastery of presenting prescriptive learning experiences were two key aspects which defined my identity as an 'effective' authority figure. This had the capacity to deter pupil dialogue as well as discourage misconduct. These are central themes I recognised in Giroux's (1983) advancement of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy considers schools in their "historical context as dominant social, cultural and political institutions ... [and advances a] commitment to social transformations for the collective good" (Ryoo et al. 2009).

Critiquing traditional pedagogies, the concept was described as political because its practice was inherently productive and directive rather than neutral or objective. In this culture of conformity and passive absorption of knowledge, teachers, by proxy, were viewed as all powerful as pedagogy was reduced to a transmission model. Freire's (1993) critique of education as 'banking' (i.e. accumulation) resonated with me: his view, which is embedded within critical pedagogy, was that education should be emancipatory. I recognised the pressure to revert to didactic teaching in the face of quantifiable assessments; or when relational conflict emerged. It was then I tended to justify reducing education to the depositing of information from subject to object. In the light of the realisation that I was complicit in creating and maintaining these conditions, my AR sought to address the radical questions raised by critical pedagogy. My conception of success and effectiveness were redefined in terms of greater pupil autonomy, emancipation and participation in the context of social justice. These defined my understanding of 'educational values'. The intention had to contend with prominent school culture and educational practice within the research site. The school advocated both conformist and 'top-down' models which reinforced assigned status conferred by the institution (Porter 2006): in this context the subordinate child was, in Cannella's words (1999: p.36): "The ultimate 'Other'".

Thus, this study gave a 'voice' to 'Others' who were afforded opportunities to comment on the 'ordinary, everyday aspects' of their own experiences (Dyer 2002; Filippini & Vecchi 2000). The

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) promoted the rights of children to participate actively in all matters affecting them. Despite DCSF (2008) publications advocating the need to listen to the voices of children, and DfE (2012d) producing statutory guidance to involve young people in decision making, prompting a consultation on well-being (Dex & Hollingworth 2012), I took heed of the reminder by Noyes (2005) that “the power differentials between teacher and pupil required careful negotiation and critique in order to allow pupils to shape dialogues”. Soyini-Madison (2005: p.9) cited Conquergood to frame dialogue as performance with the aim of ‘dialogical performance’ “to bring self and Other together so they may question, debate, and challenge one another”.

The emphasis on democratic practice and emancipation, which Giroux (2011) continued to champion, is illustrative of my intention to *‘improve’*. Through critiquing descriptors informing quantifiable notions of teacher effectiveness, I moved to address the implicit indicators which accompany these favourable judgements. Thus I scrutinized the legitimacy of apparent order and pupil compliance as being conducive to conditions which best facilitate narrow quantifiable progress depicted by grade boundaries. I argue that this descriptor of school climate inhibits the teacher’s sense of authenticity and suppresses the pupils’ experience of having a genuine voice to shape their contribution.

Freire (1993: p.53) advocated beginning with “the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students”. My AR sought to unmask the subtlety of injustice in my own previous practice, question my exercise of control through the vehicle of prescriptive tasks, and identify the underlying dominance masquerading as permissible respect. Acknowledgement of these established obstructive traits and conditions constituted my subsequent exploration of how I might improve my effectiveness as a leader of young people (Temple 2005). This study aimed to address criticism of Critical Theory, that its application to education has produced limited comments on practice (Cohen et al. 2007). My rationale was to show how conditions which encourage emancipation also produce more harmonious and productive conditions for learning.

### 3.3.2: Complexity of the term 'effectiveness'

Elliott (2006) recommended pragmatism recognising education meets utilitarian ends in developing human capital for a competitive 'knowledge economy'. Thus, Elliott advocated a blend (in Aristotelian terms) of *techne*, "know how", and *phronesis*, "practical wisdom" (Dottori 2009: p.184).

As my research took place within the normal functioning of a school, my performance and the academic performance of my students continued to be subject to external quantifiable judgements (e.g. by Ofsted and internal Performance Management observations). The implications were my exploratory approach to 'classroom management' and pedagogy could not be at the expense of my pupils' attainment.

In accord with comments from critical friends, it became apparent that I too would have to be pragmatic if this study was to meet the realistic expectations of colleagues. My account would have to address and make clear that egalitarian alternatives to authoritarian 'control' were not weak and unprofessional. I was acutely aware practitioners would review my work in light of the requirement to be (and be seen to be) 'effective'; this out of necessity would have to encompass expressions of their authority in testing situations. I was also mindful that my advocated approaches needed to ensure pupils met academic targets. My work endorsed the need for adults to be assertive when required to guide and direct (Temple 2002a). My research presumption is that a teacher can be authoritative without being authoritarian. This encapsulated something of my claims for personal transformation – I expected the journey I am describing to make me *more* 'effective' than in my authoritarian period, when I was already considered to be effective. McNiff et al.'s (2001: Kindle-mark: 135) contribution was helpful:

"To be action research, there must be *praxis* rather than practice. Praxis is informed, committed action that gives rise to knowledge rather than just successful action".

This distinction invited a re-evaluation of the emphasis I afforded to my established 'successful' pedagogical practice which was habitually predetermined, largely devoid of democratic process, and contrived. Looking beyond the academic accent on the acquisition of prescribed

facts and skills, Whitehead (2009: p.107) pointed out that “much learning is not educational”. In distinguishing learning from educational learning he suggested the latter is informed by values which carry hope for the future. I sought to revitalize pupils’ natural exuberance, curiosity and love for learning which may have been stifled by their experiences of schooling. My new openness, bringing comparative uncertainty for teacher and learners, would provide a platform for trust to circulate (Youdell 2011).

My experimental approach to pedagogy drew from Dewey’s (1938) pragmatic sense of discovery, trial and error. The ensuing observations and interpretations of group responses to pedagogical opportunities were informed by Complexity Theory. Ball (2003: p.5) identified Complexity as a “science of collective behaviour”. This emerging paradigm critiques oversimplification in research and was utilized to study dynamic classroom interactions, interrelationships and pedagogical processes. Drawing on Datta’s (1994) metaphor that neither the quantitative hook set for the big fish, nor the qualitative net scaled for the little fish adequately captures life in most seas, Phelps & Hase (2002) suggested what we need to become scuba divers. Action research was presented as a powerful vessel from which to conduct forays into the complexity of groupings within educational establishments.

### **3.3.3: Complexity**

Carnegie (1996) called for value-laden dynamics such as ‘school coherence’ and ‘classroom ambiance’ to become subject to enquiry. Kuhn (2008: p.169) affirmed: “Complexity offers a way of envisaging and working with complex phenomena... such as educational endeavour”. This application highlighted a progressive shift from the study of ‘organised complexity’ to issues related to ‘organising complexity’. Subsequently, there was a special category of complex systems which was created especially to accommodate living beings (Baranger 2002). The concept emerging in the 1980s upon creation of the Santa Fe Institute in New Mexico (Alhadeff-Jones 2008) was termed ‘complex adaptive systems’ (CAS). As their name indicates they are capable of changing themselves to adapt to a changing environment. They can also change the environment to suit themselves (Waldrop 1992).



Phelps & Hase (2002: p.1) affirmed “action research provides a valid methodological approach to the study of complexity”. In accordance with my process of reconceptualization, I placed an emphasis upon the contributory factors influencing behaviour rather than the positivist preoccupation with causes (Mason 2008). This complimented my interest in probing the underlying goals or purposes and intensions behind pupils’ contextual behaviour in the classroom. Engaging complexity in educational research involved researchers in a complex process of marrying complexity habits of thought with a range of aims. “It meant recognising that complexity per se does not have an ethical intent. *It is the researcher who is committed to human betterment*” (Kuhn 2008: p.179 italics added). Whilst Kuhn (2008) advocated the researcher should understand his/her own personal quest for improvement, I moved beyond my professional obligations to deliver academic content, to accept the moral responsibility for “being integral...‘a catalyst’ in the “becoming of students” (Sawada & Caley 1985: p.17) as they interacted (Haggis 2008).

Tosey (2002) remarked, many teachers find Complexity Theory conceptually interesting, but have difficulty applying ideas in practice. It is ‘conceptual fudge’ (Haggis 2008: p.153) which induces the miscellaneous use of familiar terms (Human-Vogel 2008). Kuhn (2008: p.178) warned there is a danger of drifting into an erroneous misapplication of the paradigm’s essence as “Complexity metaphors are descriptive but are often taken as prescriptive... complexity’s ‘is’ is moved into an ‘ought’, an injunction to change ‘how things are’ (that is, to make them self-organising, dynamic and emergent)”. The descriptor chimed with my evolving perspective which viewed classrooms as essentially adaptive environments.

Thus, whilst my work acknowledged these concerns, it embraced Kuhn’s (2008) invitation to consider which aspects of complexity I found useful, so to identify how these ideas related to other discourses and beliefs with which I engaged. Mindful that the notion of control is illusory, I sought to recognise and understand the emergent behaviour as pupils’ were afforded opportunities to self-organise according to a few simple rules. Mason (2008: p.12) proceeded to

acknowledge this “is difficult for managers [and teachers] to entertain who seek certainty, control, predictability and narrow accountability”.

### **3.3.4: Transaction Analysis**

Berne (1961) provided a structural model to consider ego states. These refer to consistent patterns of feeling, thinking and behaviour which have been influenced by past experiences and relationships. These have the capacity to distort or contaminate the way we function in the present (Widdowson 2010). This I argue is evident through my performance in Chapter Four, when I habitually reverted to old teachings and old learnings (Temple 2008). I interrogate these in Chapter Six. References to Transactional Analysis (TA) in school are sparse (Tudor 2009). “It is in the Adult ego state we have our choice of options” (Berne 1961: p.76); for these enable us to respond to situations in the here and now. My study made use of associate approaches including Karpman’s Drama Triangle (1968) and specifically Temple’s (1999) focus on the behavioural diagnosis of ego states which was originally formulated in educational settings. Her ‘TIFF’ instrument, described further in the Methods section, and applied through Action Research, was integral to the structured articulation of knowledge. For Anderson (2006a: p.382) the analytic ethnographer’s understanding derived from engaged dialogue and entailed self-conscious introspection – a “reflexivity which involves an awareness of the reciprocal influence between ethnographers and their settings and informants”. Colin (1977) recognised the linkage between person and the play of power in self-formation or identity, suggesting it was this interplay which grounds self-study.

### **3.3.5: First Person AR**

I utilized two additional models to critically examine my own contribution to the various social and learning climates I participated in. Argyris & Schon’s (1975) structural representation of theory into practice informed my individual performance as I sought to move from an affiliation with the technical to the emancipatory (Habermas 1972). In particular I questioned my

propensity to revert to seeking alternative strategies when attempts to improve my classroom climate did not yield the responses I hoped for. This tendency to rely on skill acquisition was coined 'single loop learning'. Habermas (1972) argued that this produces constrained instrumental knowledge provided by an external body, leaving underlying assumptions unexamined. For me this was best illustrated through my absorption and application of Assertive Discipline. The exploration of incongruity between one's espoused theories and the theories I used in action, encouraged such an examination. Transformation takes place when human "assumptions, strategies and habits are challenged" (Reason & Torbert 2001: p.1). Argyris & Schon (1975) referred to this process as 'double loop learning'.

I interpreted Whitehead's (1989) phrase 'living contradiction' to depict the tension I experienced between my values, and the practice I habitually displayed. As I addressed this problem, it is the 'living I' which was "placed at the centre of educational enquiries, not as an abstract personal pronoun but as a real-life human being" (McNiff et al. 2003: p.72). Living Theory afforded my own unique contribution to this methodological web requiring researcher reflexivity, emphasising the research journey, the emotional nature of social research, and the process of knowledge construction. My research aimed to do justice to the complexity of embodied experience, defined by Brown et al. (2011: p.493) "as feelings, sensations, and engagements with the world". Anderson (2006a) advocated the researcher is visible within textual visibility offering self-illustrate analytic insights. This involved openly discussing changes in their beliefs and relationships as they recount their own experiences and thoughts as well as documenting those of others.

I advanced an understanding of the world from my own point of view, as an individual claiming originality and making judgments responsible with universal intent by making a commitment to tacit, personal knowledge (Polanyi 1958). Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) considered tacit knowledge to be context-specific, arising from one's own experiences and involved intangible factors such personal belief, perspective and value system. However, I am mindful of

Anderson's (2006a) caution for the analytic ethnographer was to include dialogic engagement with data and/or others so as to avoid tendencies for self-absorption.

### **3.4: Values**

Values were initially defined as meaning "those qualities which give meaning and purpose to our personal and professional lives" (Whitehead 1998: p.2). In order to enact them within the classroom, especially during moments when pressure turns to stress, I made a "commitment to the development of self-awareness, moment by moment reflexivity, and the on-going examination of patterns, behaviour and relating" (Wicks et al. 2008: p.23). Research into my leadership of individuals who form groups was necessarily dynamic. Creating engaging pedagogical opportunities required me to take risks, to be imaginative. As a facilitator it placed me on the brink, less sure of what the next step would be, I operated in the present for the future was unknown (Whitehead & McNiff 2006); "I allow[ed] my values to become vulnerable" (Bachelard 1969: p.59). This raised ethical issues regarding self-care. This was addressed through application of Temple's (2002b) TIFF instrument (see 3.5.7) which advocated that all benefit – including me.

The values selected to envelop my transactions and interactions with pupils were:

- Respect (through transactions)
- Fairness (through appropriate authority)
- Responsibility (for my reactions)
- Trust (to enable opportunities for independence and interdependence)

I argue these were appropriately compatible with Elliott's (2006) conception of educational values.

As the author of this research, I stood in the hub of the dynamic flow within my classroom, formulating a living theory which sought a consistent and telling correlation between deeply held values and my conduct as an adult in a position of authority. I took full responsibility for contributing to the well-being of children with whom I related. I recognised 'values' as a contested terrain which needed to be negotiated, and accepted that there are few overarching universal values (Berlin 1969). In problematizing the question of values, I came to understand them as dependent upon social practices rather than as abstract principles (Raz 2003). I advanced their significance as key in determining the application of 'appropriate' authority to incidents of dynamic interactions. I employed a self-study of my professional practice allowing my ontological values to provide a format, and a structure, for contemplating relevant elements impacting on my work which are historically and contemporaneously autobiographical.

Deriving from my ontological and epistemological stance, my "methodological values lent discipline and systemization to my enquiries" (Whitehead & McNiff 2006: p.25). These value judgements became my standards of judgement. Therefore, I sought to identify actions which had influenced learning; analysed data for meanings within the identified nub of interactions so to ascertain whether my values were integral, being realised in relational practice, or whether they were conspicuous by their absence. This latter element is deemed essential in illustrating that the data is real. As Elliott (2007: p.230) contended, quality as experienced "is always multifaceted, contested and never fully representable". Soyini-Madison (2005) concurred that: meanings can never be authentic for human consciousness, ensuring true meaning is always coloured and filtered.

My living standards of judgement were rooted in values which extended beyond mere technical skills to judge what was good about practices I partook in. As the originator of my living theory I sought to search for those things I considered worthwhile presenting evidence which showed the good in action as I frequented the 'space' (Mooney 1957 in Bullough & Pinnegar 2001) and negotiated the 'intersection' of 'self' and 'Other' (Hamilton 1998). Mooney stated self-study does not focus on the self per se but on the space [or tension] between self and the practice

engaged in. Anderson (2006a: p.390) broadened the scope to suggest self-understanding “lies at the intersection of biography and society”. Thus he identified the final characteristic of analytic auto-ethnography to be its commitment to an analytic agenda. My study seeks to gain insight into the connections between biography and social structure; between broad social phenomena which purports stringent discipline in schools, and the nature of power in relationships which emerges from my data.

### **3.4.1: Quality**

Stake & Schwandt (2006) pointed out two views of quality which are often seen as standing in tension with each other. The first was phrased *quality-as-measured*, akin to the practical rationally encompassed in *techne* (Bullough 2008) which required a distancing from experience. This definition of quality is typically used in social science to inform policy formation and implementation (Whitehead & McNiff 2006). My study’s use of this form is limited to use of empirical meta-analysis provided by Hattie (2009) to inform my teaching and learning model (6.9.2). Any quantification in my research is based on qualitative questions and not objective measurements. They are thus unsuitable for statistical analysis.

Encompassing the essence of my claims, Stake & Schwandt (2006) advanced the term *quality-as-experienced*. Quality is a contested term for which the practitioner researcher must make a case. Rather than seek validity through quantitative measurements, I made judgements about the quality of practice in terms of what I found valuable about my practice (Whitehead & McNiff 2006). The phrase implied the discernment of quality could be located in the form of practically embodied knowledge. Elliott (2007: p.230) suggested the emphasis, which is “at once both cognitive and emotional”, was acquired in the course of “direct experience of practical situations. They manifest in the language and actions of participants” to fulfil the conditions for *quality* to be conveyed through narratives of personal experience.

### **3.4.2: Legitimization and Validity**

In the role of researcher, it was essential I established my authority to make claims to knowledge deriving from my classroom. I intend to demonstrate through this study “how I improved my personal practice; how I improved my understanding of this; and, how I improved the wider educational situation [for pupils and colleagues who are affected by my work]” (McNiff et al. 2001: Kindle-mark: 243). As with ‘effectiveness’, the term ‘improvement’, upon scrutiny, has emerged as a problematic term. I presuppose it means ‘different’. For my own performance I present the contrast documented in Chapter Four and AR in Chapter Six; for the pupils, I compare their self-reported performance between Chapter Five and AR in Chapter Six. These combined aspects qualify my claims for transformation as I challenged accepted normative practices which sustained the status quo (Whitehead & McNiff 2006). Lincoln (1995) argued, because qualitative research is often defined by uncertainty, fluidity, and emergent ideas, so too must the validity criteria be flexible. Thus, in addition to claims for personal validation (qualified above in 3.3.5), taking heed of Habermas’ (1987) criteria for social validation, I invited others to make judgements about my research before subjecting my work for institutional validation. I aligned myself with Feldman (2003: p.26) who defined validity as “the degree to which a study accurately reflects or assesses the specific topic that the research is attempting.” I came to translate Living Theory as 'theorising emerging from my Action Research'.

### **3.5: Methods: Mosaic Approach**

Mills (1959: p.123) argued that “Every man [is] his own methodologist”. In attempting to articulate this study’s methodology, I took up Clough & Nutbrown’s (2012) invitation to discover a ‘methodology for myself’ within my research, to establish my own blueprint as a researcher. Accordingly, I employed Dadds & Hart’s (2001: p.166) concept of ‘inventive methodology’ which recognised that for some practitioner researchers, creating their own unique way through their research may be as important as their self-chosen research focus. My evolving beliefs about how I might perceive and respond to classroom interactions are

conveyed through the language of metaphor (McGrath 2006). Cameron (2003) endorsed the use of metaphor in educational discourse. My construction of behaviour as weather is broadly consistent with McLean's (2003) model, which I discovered retrospectively.

I conducted a mosaic approach (Clark 2005) as I sought to capture something of the complexity inherent within the study. Ensuring triangulation I used a range of qualitative methods, drawing on questionnaires and interviews alongside observational and reflexive field-notes to address possible bias. Thus I mixed my primary evidence with secondary sources such as that provided by pupil participants, colleagues and documentation. Evolving outcomes from each cycle of research informed the most appropriate application of method to examine an emergent aspect. Associate details and application of these methods are found in Chapters Four, Five and Six. I attended a training course and purchased Nvivo Qualitative Analysis software so to organise an array of data and to interrogate themes and extract key concepts.

### **3.5.1: The use of questionnaires**

In constructing the formation of semi structured questions I drew on Patton (1990) and Spradley (1979). The study utilised a range of questioning approaches including constant sum questions, multiple choice questions, open ended questions, and contingency questions. Dichotomous questions are limited to gender identification.

### **3.5.2: The use of interviews**

Acutely aware that my attendance in other classrooms affected the pupils' behaviour I sought interviews with Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). Due to their subsidiary status in comparison to the teacher, and inconspicuous presence amongst learners, I believe this cohort offered a unique perspective. This group of adults witness behaviour in a range of classes without necessarily influencing the dynamics they observe, therefore limiting the 'Hawthorne effect' (Gillespie 1991). Five colleagues provided insight into children's variable behaviour. Four were interviewed as a group, the fifth as an individual due to availability.



I also interviewed pupils in cohorts of four so to note responses eliciting consensus or disagreement to emerging views and to encourage dialogue (Cohen et al. 2007). I was mindful of the risk that I was enabling pupils to be critical of their educational experience. I was interested to discuss their relationships with one of two Trainee teachers I had contact with who had completed their teaching practice and had then left the school. I ensured the discussion explored key themes rather than allow it to disintegrate into criticism of the individual. The length of time before consultation equated to a few months. This was partly due to Easter holidays as well as the requirement for me to (re)stabilise the classes and to deliver the planned syllabus. However, as the group only convened once a week I argue a review of their contextual behaviour in my room was fresh enough to ensure its validity and reliability. My presumptions were challenged when one of the Trainees returned briefly to work as a supply teacher. I did not consider or anticipate this happening.

On one occasion I sought permission from a single student to elaborate on a comment he had made in his questionnaire.

### **3.5.3: The use of documents**

Parlett & Dearden (1977) emphasised the role of documents to illuminate a study. I scrutinised the school's detention data as well as citing e-mail correspondence and policy documents. In accordance with Holgate (1992), the documentary evidence provided context for my data. I also submit termly evaluations of my lessons undertaken by my Line Manager. These equate to eight official observations judged against school criteria for quality assurance.

### **3.5.4: Observations**

To capture aspects of the teaching and learning exchange I developed a research tool termed 'Complexity Grid'. Based on a template from a colleague, this helped to plan, monitor and

reflect on the ebb and flow of classroom episodes. The data is supplemented by a Critical Incident sheet (Brookfield 2008) which invited the formative contribution of pupil voice.

### **3.5.5: The use of a research diary blog**

Throughout this research process I drew upon my observations of pupils who were required to attend my lessons. Spadley (1979) and Kirk & Miller (1986) suggested systematization of observations act to increase their reliability. My perspectives were documented via a research diary blog in which I submitted scores of entries detailing my daily experiences over a two year period (2008-2010). Existing electronically on the internet, access and viewing was confined to myself and supervisors. The tool served to invite my tutors' formative comments as email prompts afforded them an awareness of my submissions. The retrospective expansion of notes I made in situ encouraged arising issues, ideas and difficulties to be shared as I developed a tentative record of my on-going fieldwork. My deepening engagement with the tool and its contribution to the research process is documented here. It was originally submitted anonymously:

"I had never had cause to contribute to a blog before my supervisor established one on my behalf. Immediately I felt it legitimised my need to share embryonic thoughts negating the awkwardness of bothering my supervisors yet again. The blog has provided an excellent sounding board for me to reflect on the initial steps of my journey. Many of my contributions did not require or invite feedback yet it still served the purpose of clarifying confused territory. Timely and insightful replies and contributions from my supervisors have served to pre-empt our personal meetings enabling them to quickly establish a flow from which to explore a focussed agenda. Apart from the easy access and a comprehensive record afforded by the blog I consider its fundamental purpose has been to allow me to feel if I have something to say, I have a platform from which to be heard (even if I end up answering it myself)" (Bigger 2009a: p.3).

The research diary blog documented my immediate and detailed reflections on contact with my classes. The method provided an avenue from which to develop my personal voice and ‘caught’ ideas which cropped up in conversation, or as a result of reading, and invited further thinking (Bigger 2009a).

The documentation of evolving ideas has provided a rich source of data from which to analyse from afar; events which were charged with energy and confusion when originally recorded. Subsequently, I also implemented the tool to aid on-going communication with colleagues I worked with in this research, and those I am working with from other schools.

### **3.5.6: Colleagues as research partners**

In addition, the methods and tools I used to comprehend and construct responses to behaviour issues were utilised by several colleagues. This included an established ‘champion’ in his dealings with a challenging Year 11 class he inherited (2010); two Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) (2010/11) each seeking assistance with a specific ‘problem’ class (Y10 and Y9); and a Trainee who worked with my classes for a three month period (2011) before continuing our association throughout his NQT year. Furthermore, two additional NQTs perceived to be ‘struggling’ enabled me to further refine research tools in 2012. Their combined contribution came in the form of observations, questionnaires, diary blogs (6 of 6), emails, and interviews. With permission I also used extracts from the Trainee teacher’s reflections and subsequent observation sheets judging his performance in his first post.

### **3.5.7: Data generated from digital technology**

As with representation of dialectical forms of theory, Whitehead & McNiff (2006) argued living theory could be expressed linguistically through narrative but also had the capacity to utilise visual narratives through capturing interaction through multi-media. Bullough (1998: p.29) pointed out the “limitations of words to capture reality, which is a living and holistic entity”. Bruce-Ferguson (2008: p.106) noted “diverse perspectives and presentation styles are

indicative of an epistemological transformation in what counts as knowledge”. Thus I submitted video evidence to capture the energy within the learning conditions I had created. Robertson (2008) raised concern about the unintended ethical implications of using media such as photographs and video. This is addressed in 3.6.

I used Temple’s (2002b) well-researched development tool based on the Functional Fluency model – ‘TIFF’ (Temple Index for Functional Fluency). This was to ascertain a profile of patterns of social behaviour. I, as well as 5 of my 6 contributing colleagues undertook a TIFF on-line questionnaire, each obtained an anonymised profile and engaged in interviews to interpret its relevance for their situations.

Zimbardo & Boyd (1999) presented a robust defence of the validity of their research into the influence of Zimbardo’s Time Perspectives Inventory (2008). The free on-line tool contributed to a snapshot of my performance. I also made use of sociograms in many of the classes I taught. The approach, first attributed to Moreno (1934), was available through computer assisted software to provide insights into the social preferences of the individuals within the class.

### **3.6: Ethics**

Prior to the study, I attained a letter and signed an agreement with the Headteacher to act ethically in accordance with the school’s values and policies as I conducted research. My access to pupils was predominately confined to those I was timetabled to teach. My University’s Ethics checklist was accepted so to clear official channels.

I had established from the outset my intention to administer a summative questionnaire to classes I taught. This complemented the continuous informative feedback I received throughout lessons, which I recorded in a notebook. As a participatory researcher I found the feedback thought provoking. Specific comments criticising me and my lessons initially caused me a degree of discomfort, however, they also provided pertinent stimulus for reflection and further

discussion. This platform is consistent with the principles of Pupil Voice and Assessment for Learning. I sought to limit intrusion (Cohen et al. 2007) and argued the consultation was educational and administered so not to waste pupils' curriculum time.

The questionnaires were typically presented in the last lesson of the course and contained up to 15 questions which combined, took around 45 minutes to complete. Pupils were not given prior notice of the questionnaire so to limit the possibility of prior discussion amongst peers. As a consequence the solitary session produced an array of responses which have been re-organised to address the study's specific areas of interest. The construction of the questions ensured I was able to qualify recorded estimates through accompanying pupil accounts. I did not state withdrawal to be an option, but reiterated they were not compelled to respond. Alternative subject content was available for those who chose not to participate, and for others once they had finished commenting. I requested that participants in the first cycle recorded their name, but it was made clear to them that this was not compulsory. The rationale offered was they were the first cohort to partake in the pilot and I wished to attain feedback if required. I did not specify the nature of feedback although I anticipated it would take the form of a short conversation. Chapter Six will show this was recorded, with the pupils' permission in the form of an interview.

Pupils completed the questionnaire without consultation. I used a *Visualiser* to present and project an overview image of the questionnaire immediately prior to, and during the process of data collection. I did not view responses whilst pupils were constructing their answers nor whilst they were still in the class, unless I responded directly to an individual's request for clarity or confirmation. Limitations of this planned data collection emerged. Firstly, two key classes were unexpectedly cancelled on the day I had allocated for questionnaires. Secondly, individuals absent from classes contributing data did not have an opportunity to participate due to the cessation of the course post submission. Thirdly, illegible responses and numeric mistakes were generally not seen until afterwards and so could not be clarified for inclusion.

The ethical considerations were consistent with my philosophical stance which are constant throughout this study. I also adhered to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which “requires that children who are capable of forming their own views should be granted the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them” (BERA 2011: p.6). My classes were mixed-ability and I considered all participants to be generally able to evaluate and articulate their own experiences of schooling. I was mindful of Denscombe & Aubrook’s (1992) suggestion that many pupils may regard participation in research as ‘just another piece of school work’. I considered this was unlikely to be the case with many pupils, as the invitation to anonymously voice their opinion about their perception of me, and their experience of our lessons was a novel task.

BERA (2011: p.5) cautioned “dual roles may also introduce explicit tensions in areas such as confidentiality and must be addressed accordingly”. I have taken great care to anonymise all participants’ identities throughout this thesis. This was inclusive of pupils and colleagues. I have also removed any reference to the host school’s crest in photographs or documents. The school’s Ofsted reports are omitted from the list of references in order to protect identity.

Socio-metric data was gathered under the same conditions as questionnaires. These were used to read underlying patterns of social and personal allegiances within the class. It was explained I wanted to know more about the friendships (and possible tensions) within the group so I was better informed to understand the dynamics when constructing group work and seating plans. The column communicating pupils’ negative choices (those they would rather not sit with) was optional. The option to abstain was written down on the form and reinforced clearly during instruction. Many did not fill this column in. It did however afford pupils the opportunity to convey their discomfort with certain peers so enabling the teacher to make informed decisions about seating location and tasks requiring collaboration.

Košir & Pečjak (2005) highlighted some authors who expressed concern about ethical considerations related to the use of negative nominations. Studies that have examined these

possible negative effects indicate that when the sociometric questionnaire is appropriately administered, there is no reason for such concerns (e.g. Hayvren & Hymel, 1984; Bell-Dolan et al., 1989). Bell-Dolan et al. (1989) suggested repeating questions about the positive over time could eliminate the need for negative. Answers to the negative question identifies rejected but not neglected children, whilst highlighting those pupils deemed 'controversial' (Leung & Silberling 2006).

The timing of the data collection at the beginning of a lesson, ensured it was quickly followed by an activity to ensure opportunities for consequential discussion of peer choices was kept to a minimum. The sociograms were not viewed by anyone other than myself and were constructed at home. Indeed all data from the research was removed immediately upon completion to be stored in my study at home. Collegial subjects who used sociograms agreed to keep the resulting data confidential. No pupils have ever approached me to make further enquiries of the results. Pupils' identities were obscured and are referenced according to alphabetical lettering in Chapter Six.

The gathering of evidence of learning from video is consistent with established practice within the school. It was filmed and will be used in accordance with prior conditions and consent established with the Headteacher. Both the Headteacher and Head of Faculty have viewed the extract I will submit for validation. I did not seek prior consent from pupils/parents due to the impromptu circumstances which prompted the filming. Ethical concerns were raised during the viva and are addressed in the Postscript. Originally filming was conducted to capture evidence in order to contest a judgement made during an Ofsted inspection. I obtained the written consent from the Trainee Teacher who appeared in the film to use it as part of validation.

BERA (2011: p.5) stated:

“Researchers engaged in action research must consider the extent to which their own reflective research impinges on others, for example in the case of the dual role of teacher and researcher and the impact on students and colleagues”.

Each interview participant in the study was asked if they would share their opinions. I did not take children out of academic lessons. I ensured each session took place with the prior consent of the child’s tutor. Each interview took place during a Form Period. These specified times typically incorporate informal social interaction as well as administrative tasks, so disruption to formal learning was kept to a minimum. As with the questionnaires, the interviews enabled the pupils to have a platform to communicate their experiences of school. I believe these opportunities represent the essence of Pupil Voice.

I am mindful that my history and position within the school I am researching ensured all relationships between me and research subjects, be they colleagues or pupils, was infused with power in accordance to my status and reputation (Arksey & Knight 1999). I was particularly aware of these factors on the three occasions that I observed colleagues teaching their classes. Although I was invited by colleagues to attend their lessons I took care to be as unobtrusive as possible by my positioning and by engaging in minimal eye contact with the pupils. Essentially, I was keen not to undermine colleagues’ authority. As has become my practice, I asked colleagues beforehand how they would like me to respond to, and communicate to them, any behavioural incidents I observed which they may have missed. I believe this helped to create a distinction for the teacher between my imminent role as a researcher, and my established position as a staff member. On another occasion I interviewed a lone pupil, I ensured the door was left open, and that my tone was one of gratitude for his willingness to participate and emphasised curiosity. I consider this approach enabled the student to speak honestly and freely so initiating the line of research documented in 6.9.

I have also taken heed of Robertson’s (2008) concern about family members being unintendedly implicated. This is particularly relevant for presentation of my ontological



coverage in which I interrogate situations from my childhood. I have attained permission from my family to convey aspects of our shared past. This was important as it covers sensitive issues which, I suggest are direct consequences of my parents' divorce.

In the next chapter I begin the process of reconnaissance by presenting *an examination of my former practice*, so to meet the study's first objective, stated in 1.7.

## Chapter 4: Reconnaissance: My Educational and Professional Journey

### 4.1: Context

My fixation with suppression is succinctly encapsulated by the title of the commercial best seller *Getting the Buggers to Behave* (Cowley 2001) which, according to Visser (2001) has no theoretical underpinnings. Bennett (2010), behaviour 'expert' for the *Times Educational Supplement* (TES), invites readers of his book, *Behaviour Guru* to 'skip the theory' claiming that his techniques 'work'. The authors draw predominately on assumptions (such as 'students need discipline') and folk wisdom (e.g. Friday afternoon is a difficult time to teach). I once subscribed unreflectively to these common generalisations as I fulfilled my duties with conviction.

Carr & Kemmis (1986), writing on critical pedagogy and action research, warned that the endorsement of 'implicit' or 'tacit' theories ensures much teacher action becomes the product of custom, habit, coercion and ideology, which acts to unconsciously constrain performance. Ideology, a complex and contested concept described by McLennan (1986: p.1) as "the most elusive concept in the whole of social science", is defined by Brookfield (2008: p.41) as:

"the broadly accepted values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and justifications that appears self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace".

I argue that the essence of this definition was evident within my coverage of disciplinarian discourse within the literature review. It was my allegiance to this pragmatic philosophy during interview which resulted in my secondment to the Local Education Authority (LEA) in 2003. My role was to disseminate the Government's National Strategy for Behaviour and Attendance (B & A). Whilst the DfES' (2003) documentation espoused "values, principles and beliefs that inform an inclusive whole school policy" (Core Day 1 Training Materials Slide 1: 2003), the implicit messages I absorbed from the Strategy's Regional Director were the importance of tangible results through the establishment of discipline and order. The intensive year affirmed that my established quick fix approach, through assertiveness and sanctions, was the dimension most colleagues I encountered seemed to desire.

Thus the subsequent phase between 2004 and 2008 affords a glimpse of the acute psychological state I had come to acquire as I returned to my school with blinkered intentions to improve the school's culture. My professional story conveys how sincere gestures to make things better became increasingly subject to perfectionist tendencies which strove to meet rigorous external standards.

Kohn (1996) argued one's beliefs about children colour disciplinary (and educational) approaches. Larrivee (2005) and Schmuck & Schmuck (2001) showed various theoretical positions concerning student discipline which reside along a power continuum, ranging from laissez-faire to autocratic. Cannella (1999: p.36) offered a broader perspective to the discussion reminding that, regardless of relationship, institutional status ensures when labelled 'pupil', 'student' or 'learner', the child becomes:

“the ultimate ‘Other’ than the adult –those who must have their decisions made for them because they are not yet mature – those who must gain knowledge that has been legitimized by those who are older and wiser”.

Successive legislation over the course of a century formalised the erosion of children's liberties through the compulsory requirement for them to receive formal education (Norris, 2007; Simmons 2008). Whilst the argument suggesting duress is tempered with the consideration that the right to education is equated with the basic entitlement of all children (Grover 2004), children's status as subordinates within schools is common.

Through my central aim, in one school, during a specific period of time in its history, I utilise Foucault's (1977) conceptualization of power to better understand how I became increasingly embroiled in contestations. I now see that power is not solely at play in the context of a domination/powerless dichotomize, but also in the context of creative acts of resistance. These are produced as human beings interact within the subtleties of dynamic relationships. These are “shaped by moments of dominance and autonomy” within the classroom (Darder et al. 2008: p.7). Whilst the present study asks deeper philosophical questions and employs theoretical lens to comprehend these complexities, this chapter portrays a simplistic allegiance

to coercive power as I sought to simply quell expressions of dissent, rather than question their claims for legitimacy.

I present a review of the psychological and relational costs of abiding by conventional notions of teacher effectiveness. The nature of effectiveness is subject to scrutiny throughout the thesis, but here draws on affirmation from the school's Head-teacher, Ofsted inspectors and pupil accounts.

In accordance with Brookfield (1995), the review of practice invited the author to become critical in reflection. Winter (1989) spoke of the need for dialectical reflexivity (awareness of the wider social, cultural, political economic and other forces that influence how one thinks), as well as critical reflexivity (awareness of how one thinks). My literature review and methodology chapters provided holistic coverage and chart my growing appreciation of the political influences which framed my institutional world. As Carr & Kemmis (1986) termed it, my task as a critical action researcher is to discover how situations are constrained by 'both objective' and 'subjective' conditions.

'Objective' can be defined as a consciousness that is 'outside of' the 'self' – appreciating the influence of macro systems on the micro detailed interactions (Schostak 2002). In this chapter, it specifically refers to critical concepts such as ideology, and contextual conditions which shape and sustain roles people traditionally adopt in school. Whilst Skinner's (1987) behaviourist theory purported feelings to be irrelevant due to the inability to confirm them objectively, I will argue the influence of emotion nonetheless has the capacity to shape teachers' internal perspectives (Hoeksma et al. 2004; Sutton et al. 2009) and determine behaviour. This is substantiated in 4.2.6 (below) and considered further in Chapter Six. However, heeding Hegelund's (2005) caution about the danger of bias accompanying adherence to either of the subjective/objective stances, I subscribe to the view that the divide represents a false dichotomy and therefore utilize both to describe my performance as an authority figure.

Before an OFSTED inspection in 2004, my school wished to develop a consistent behaviour policy. The Head-teacher affirmed my response, recognising the purpose behind my efforts in a reference (2008):

“As Lead teacher for Behaviour Improvement... Sean developed our school’s strategy to devise systems that supported young people in the school to improve their behaviour”.

My strategy was greatly influenced by a contemporary flagship for embedded organisational ‘good practice’. Ninestiles School, a high profile State school in Birmingham, UK, was praised for a ‘zero tolerance’ stance on misbehaviour. The ‘Discipline for Learning’ policy (Ofsted 2000:19, p.9) sought to rationalise the legitimacy of adherence to traditional hierarchical roles so to enable learning:

“Students must follow staff instructions first time round. This is the foundation of good behaviour, making sure students do what they're told with no quibbling. Without this basic principle, which puts staff in charge, chaos ensues” (de Waal 2009).

I had a template for organizational ‘effectiveness’ to guide my work.

A ‘Consequence’ system and accompanying rules (Figures 4.1 & 4.2 below) set the framework for “halting”, as the serving Deputy Head-teacher in 2004 reflected in 2010, “the deterioration of standards in the school”.

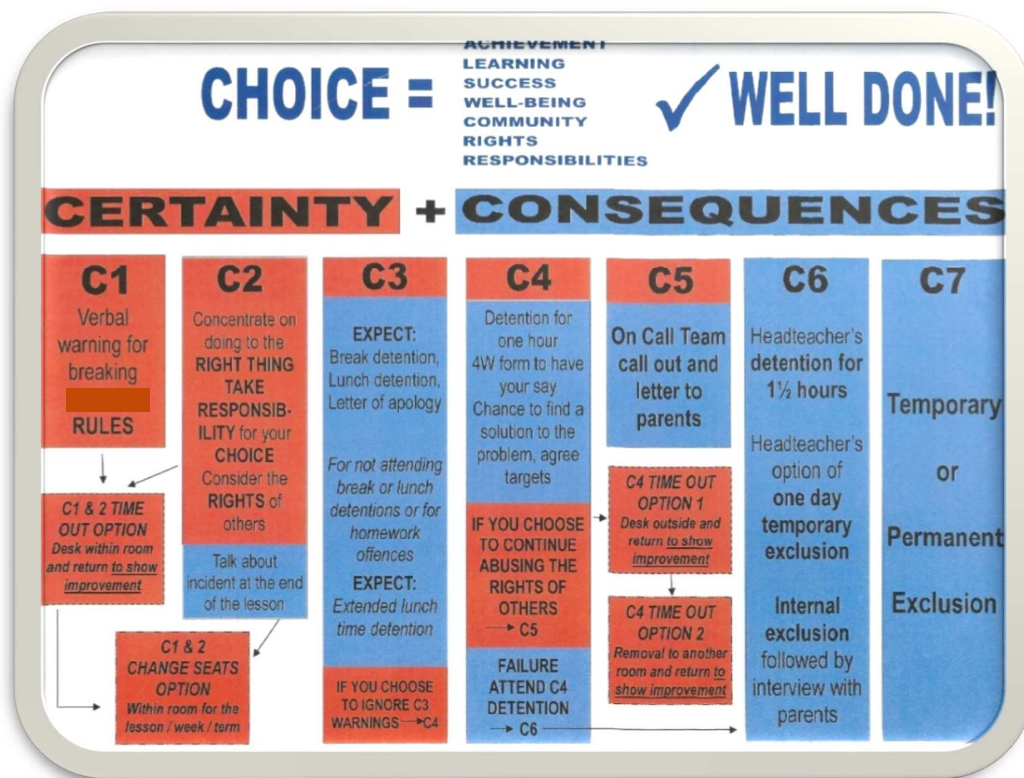


Figure 4.1

The red aspects in the diagram above seek to provide directives, and a shared, unambiguous language for the teacher to use. The blue boxes clarify for the pupil what they can expect as a consequence if their behaviour prompts the teacher to administer a 'C'. The rules (below) were formulated through my engagement with various DfE literature and subsequent consultation with some members of the school's Senior Leadership. The aim was to draw attention to key aspects of classroom life and to provide illustrative examples for each section. Typical of my directness, each of these templates were developed with minimal consultation from the general staff or pupils. The final versions were printed off as posters, laminated and placed on the walls of all classrooms.

\*(Social) **TREAT OTHER PEOPLE WITH RESPECT:**

examples:

- ⇒ listen when others are speaking
- ⇒ queue sensibly for lessons, meals and buses
- ⇒ wait and open doors
- ⇒ never use language that could cause offence
- ⇒ never join in with bullying or harassment of any kind
- ⇒ follow staff instructions and do not answer back

\*(Conduct) **BEHAVE SAFELY AND DO NOT HARM OTHERS:**

examples:

- ⇒ keep your hands to yourself
- ⇒ walk sensibly on the left of the corridors
- ⇒ remain within designated areas
- ⇒ obey all safety instructions in practical subjects

\*(Conduct) **LOOK AFTER THE ENVIRONMENT:**

examples:

- ⇒ keep classrooms clean and tidy
- ⇒ put litter in the bins, be careful and look after the school property
- ⇒ report any vandalism or damage
- ⇒ eat or drink in designated areas only. Do not bring chewing gum into school

\*(Ready to learn) **BE ON TIME AND BE PREPARED TO LEARN:**

examples:

- ⇒ arrive on time for the start of lessons, registration or assembly
- ⇒ move on the warning bell
- ⇒ bring the correct equipment, books and planner for each lesson

\*(Learning) **WORK HARD AND LET OTHERS LEARN:**

examples:

- ⇒ concentrate on the learning task
- ⇒ never disrupt other students' learning
- ⇒ contribute sensibly to lessons and raise your hand to offer answers
- ⇒ listen and pay attention when the teacher is speaking

Figure 4.2

Subsequently, Ofsted (2004: p.11) deemed behaviour to be effective:

“Behaviour in the school and the quality of relationships have both improved significantly since the last inspection...”

This judgment is further qualified:

“The behaviour of most pupils is very good, and often excellent, although there is a minority, often lower-attaining boys, who at times try to disrupt lessons and display immature manners” (2004: p.11).

I concluded the strong systems acted as a deterrent. My simplistic belief was if these pupils were tempted to become distracted, the threat of consequences was enough for them to cease their course of action. If they were not cooperative with staff, they would at least be compliant so as not to escalate the consequences. However, limitation of this deterrent quickly became apparent as, for some pupils, I would suggest the system merely interrupted their activities, only to have them reassume in another time and/or place.

#### **4.2: The Situation**

Affirming my conviction to subdue the ‘hard-core’, documentation revealed this significant minority of students dominated detention lists and typically exhibited a range of low level disruptive behaviour, alongside more wilful defiance and challenge. This habitually involved specific pupils and was more prevalent with specific staff. To categorize, key and consistent terms used in referrals are recorded as: ‘failure to settle; distracted (off-task); distracting others; ignoring instructions; undermining and being disrespectful to staff, interruptions; defiance; and, argumentative’. School data highlights the three highest offenders in Year 8 were males who had accumulated a shared total of 51 detentions between January-March. Subject teachers’ Progress Reports, issued in January, had alerted to impending difficulties, flagging up a combined 27 areas for concern. One boy in Year 9 was issued 39 sanctions in the same period. Each of the Year 8 students were eventually expelled from the school. The Year 9 boy was transferred to a Special school. In the meantime my self-appointed role was to meet each and



every challenge they exhibited head-on. This conviction is noted by the Head-teacher (2006) in a private letter:

“I have also greatly appreciated the way you have tackled difficult incidents, never turning a blind eye even when it would have been easier to do so”.

My strategic response was two-fold – equipping staff through professional development and relieving them of responsibility for taking detentions – I would become their ‘enforcer’.

#### **4.2.1: Training colleagues**

During 2005, although my own practice became increasingly draconian, many of the ideas I espoused in training others were more philosophical.



Figure 4.3

Using Bill Rogers’ idea, which he shared during a training event at my previous school in 1998, I presented a single black dot on a white sheet of paper and asked the group to describe what they saw (above). Predictably the focus homed in on the dot rather than the expansive white space. I spoke of our habitual tendencies to ignore the majority and focus most of our energies and disproportionate amount of time on the minority. The realization that a faulty perspective could lead to one mislabelling a class hit home for a senior male member of staff. Despite his body language representing the archetypal sceptic of new-fangled theories and ideas throughout the training I conducted, the next day a bottle of wine awaited me in my pigeon hole with a note attached to a label:

“Sean – thanks again for yesterday morning. I had the best lesson I’ve ever had with 8CP lesson 5 as a direct result of looking at my own feelings and attitudes towards the class. I saw the white space and not the black dot; for there are some wonderful students in the group – all of them if you look right! Thanks again”.

This idea would expand to represent the composition of a typical class. It would encompass the categories light and dark greys before coming to be associated with the metaphor of weather during this study.

The Head-teacher (2006) conveyed his gratitude for my continued and sincere efforts:

“Governors congratulate you ... particularly ... the high quality training programme on behaviour management you provided for all teachers. We also appreciate the work you do on a day-to-day basis in promoting high standards of behaviour throughout the school. No-one could ask for a more professional or dedicated colleague”.

Unbeknown to the Head-teacher or Governors, cognitive advice sometimes seemed inadequate as individual colleagues, both male and female exhibited the depth of their distress through sobbing. My genuine empathy and sympathy with those vied with increasing frustration and judgement I felt towards others as I sought to regulate the conduct of colleagues despite micro circumstances being clearly beyond my control.

#### **4.2.2: Sanctions**

Initially, upon taking over the inconsistent detention experience, I identified a central room close to the hub of the school. I volunteered and then committed to taking, or being involved in, every whole school detention for the next four years. The third and fourth years were on a daily basis. The lunchtime provision compelled attendance for one hour. It was arranged in response to the escalating demand for consequences to be administered to a hard core of pupils, especially a cohort in Year 10, and their propensity to skip after school detentions therefore clogging up the system. I arranged for the Leadership Team members, including the Head-teacher to formulate a team to assist me. If students failed to attend, colleagues went to search for them. This process became ever more efficient as targeted individual pupils were

collected from lessons prior to lunchtime, and 'walkie-talkies' / CCTV aided communication and surveillance.

Under the banner of standards I stipulated complete obedience was required during detentions. It was during these sessions I adhered to the concept of zero tolerance. Upon entering children were met with a sign which spelt-out/reinforced expectations. Protocols and rituals were quickly established without any scope for discussion. Coats were removed upon arrival, bags were assigned to be beneath their desks, and pupils were strategically seated. This was to break up alliances and avert sight lines to each other; the environment was ordered and silent. Quantz et al.'s (2011) text on the non-rational impact of ritual on broader school performance and educational identity provided rich insight into understanding the patterns apparent within schooling. During these periods of confinement I wished to convey, through both verbal and non-verbal dialogue, that the detainees were to assume the role of docile subordinates.

An observed outcome of conduct in detentions and subsequent isolation was usually, and somewhat surprisingly, total compliance with stated requirements. However, it always felt as if it was on a 'knife edge'. I recall very clearly the cloak I adorned whenever I approached the sites. It was one of protection, of bravado which suppressed any inkling of anxiety. I psychologically adopted a bullish mask of confidence, assurance and assertiveness. It manifested in my walk, my stance and exuded my persona. Quantz et al. (2011: p.37) recognised such preparation as ritual, formalized as symbolic performance, we:

"carefully imbue our self, our identity, our claims to power... so ... we are in the best position to perform our roles in the manner we wish others to perceive us or in the manner we assume others expect of us".

Added significance of these protective traits in which I construct and project a persona comes from Zimbardo's studies cited below. His research suggested that situational forces, communicated predominately through symbols and rituals, are powerful mechanisms for altering one's identity in accordance to contextual stimuli. The pliability of human nature is illustrated as research subjects adopted specified roles differentiated by power. The arbitrary

separation of volunteers into 'guards' and 'prisoners' to simulate prison conditions was initially symbolized by uniforms before escalation of negative attributes rendered the project untenable. Echoes of the contrasting roles assumed in detentions resonate. As with Milgram's obedience experiments (1974), the Stanford Prison study (Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo 1973; Zimbardo et al. 2000; Zimbardo 2007) found the tendency for those in charge to over-assert the authority invested in them was inconsistent with their personality profiles. The studies revealed an abdication of personal responsibility, as participants deferred to duties in obedience to the 'system' they represented. As Zimbardo et al. (2000: p1) reflected "Within the context of socially approved roles, rules, and norms, a legitimizing ideology, and institutional support that transcends individual agency" 'good' people can act in ways contrary to their previous character. My continued exposure to these combined elements established in me a way of 'being' whilst in role which was contrary to the values I espoused.

I have recently engaged with Leitch's (2010) exploration of constructing physical masks to symbolize one's persona as an aid to self-inquiry. Citing Gergen (1994: p.193):

"Through mask inquiries, the teachers constructed, deconstructed and disclosed to themselves (and each other) potential relationships between representations of their 'internal' (personal) and 'external' (professional) personae".

In accordance, I present photographs representing the incongruity between my psychological state and my professional identity during this period. An initial brief explanation of the images is given below. Qualification as to why my values were often subordinate emerges in due course, and is summarised in 7.4.



Figure 4.4

The golden glow emanating from my 'internal' mask represents my abiding values; the accompanying blank socket indicates aspects of my sub-conscious which were beyond my comprehension; the lines indicate an inner tension; the pale complexion, my impoverished state. The colours emitting from my 'professional' mask denote a combination of underlying emotion, and pragmatist adherence to standards and rules as I enacted my role as an educator and an authority figure. As documented at the end of this chapter, the process - culminating in the inner state portrayed on the left - had been gradual, and precedes my embarking on a teaching career. However, substantiating the mask on the right, the time I spent at the LEA provided knowledge of legitimizing ideology, and institutional support for authoritarian behaviour programmes.

My attempts to build a holistic school behavioural approach, so recognising pupils' underlying needs, was introduced in 2006 through the IIU (below). However, exploration of possible causes of each individual's misconduct was in effect subsidiary to the non-negotiable requirement for pupils to be completely obedient to the rules of the Unit, as the tenets of AD prevailed.

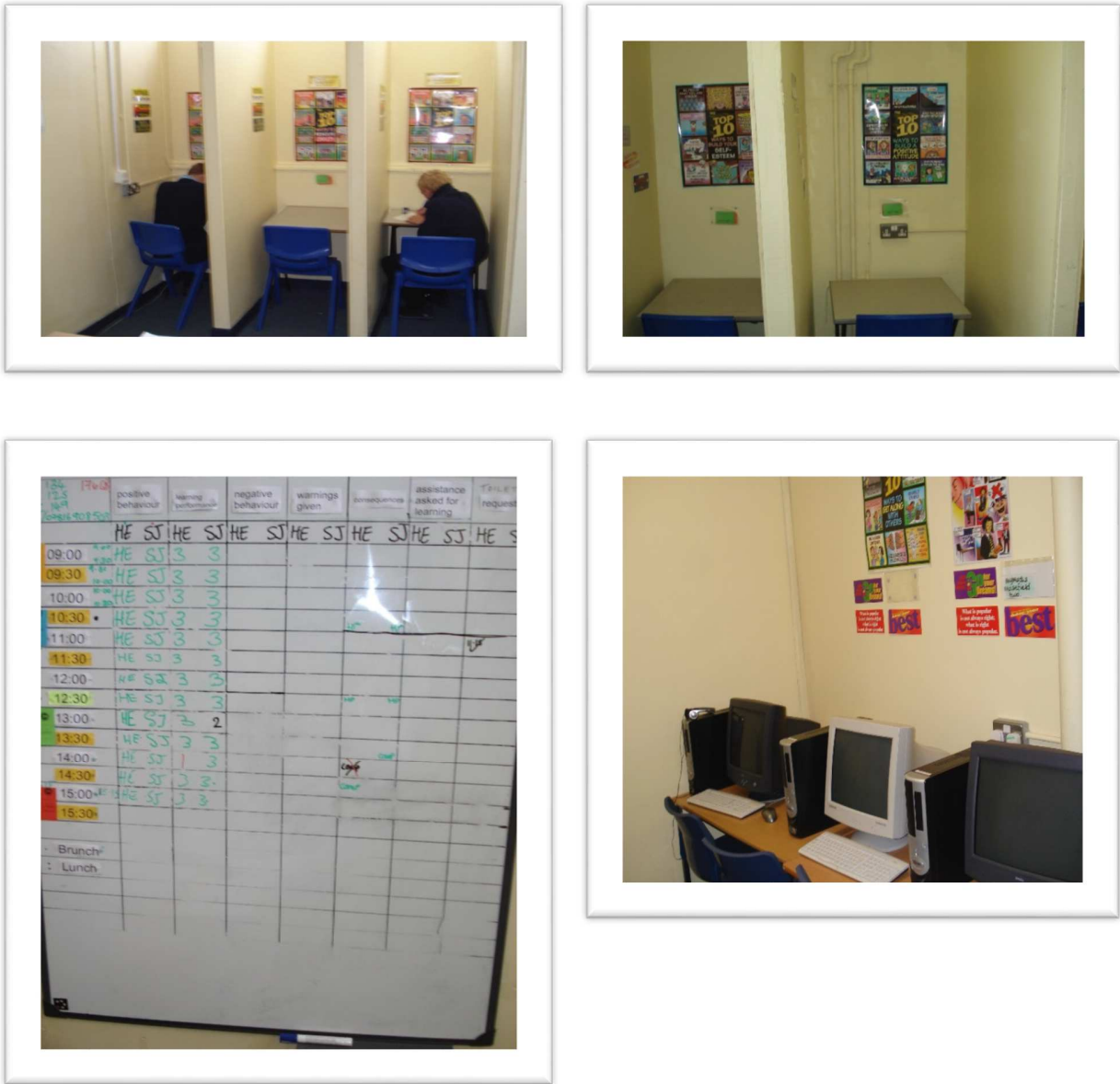
#### **4.2.3: Internal Isolation Unit**

I initially established the Internal Isolation Unit (IIU) as an alternative option to external exclusion. Constructed in a converted storage space, the IIU functioned primarily as an extension of the detention facility hosting habitual offenders for two full days per week. Its primary rationale expressed in documentation stated it "...should not be viewed as a short, sharp shock but experienced as a prolonged inconvenience the student does not want to repeat".

I took full responsibility for setting up and operating proceedings with the aid of an 'Inclusion Officer' (IO) I had interviewed and appointed. I shall express our combined work as 'we'. The Unit catered for 38 pupils during the year. Several attendees were siblings. Selection was determined by behaviour, irrespective of educational need. They were allocated places in groups of 2 or 3. The Unit represents a tangible example of the unexamined confusion which defined my state at the time. I did not conceive any philosophical contradiction between practice - which instilled complete obedience, and intervention approaches - which espoused

trust. On reflection, the construction of the IIU pre-empts the crossroads I was to approach upon commencement of this study.

Figure 4.5 (below) illustrates that compliance in the session before break resulted in pupils progressing from one set of booths to the next...

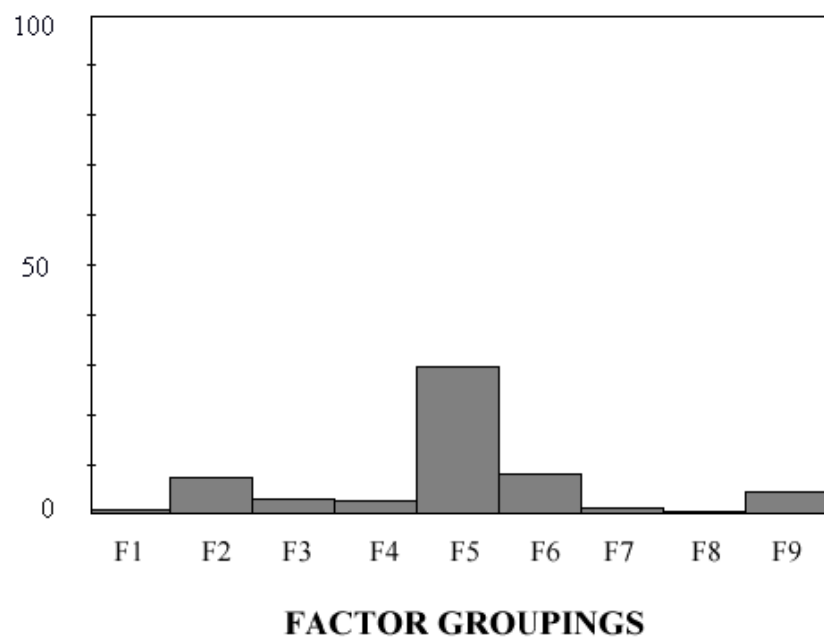


Each and every interaction is monitored and contributes to a score every 30 minutes leading to positive or negative consequences...

Successive 'Green 3s' represent the carrot or incentive to earn a place on the third station in the afternoon session which is symbolically closer to the exit.

Within this structure attempts to gather data on individual pupils offered, I reasoned, a more sophisticated interpretation of the habitual disruptive behaviour apparent through detention records. In the literature review these pupils were termed the 'significant minority'; in my current study I use the metaphor of 'Rain Clouds' to categorise the type of wilful behaviour common to this cohort. The metaphor is explained fully in Chapter Five.

Whereas I gave a case study of one student in my Masters' dissertation, in this chapter I review the whole cohort. Although I present them now as reflective findings, so to add insight to aspects of the present study, at the time emerging information did little to deter my inclination to control, as I was yet to critically engage with the incongruity between my professional and personal self. Of the 38 pupils we facilitated during the year many revealed poor eating and sleeping habits. This tended to be conveyed during informal chat as students were accompanied during break whilst the rest of the school were in lessons. Using an array of purchased software we began to construct student profiles. Predominately, we administered a digital questionnaire called PASS which measured **Pupil Attitudes to School & Self** (2002). The standardized tool poses 50 statements which invite a response from a 4-point rating scale. Of the 23 students who participated consistent trends began to emerge from the nine categories. 'Feelings about school', 'general work ethic', 'attitude to attendance', and 'response to curriculum demands' were variable, though generally high. Pupils' comparative scores also showed 'attitudes to teachers' to be generally high. The vast majority of the cohort who had spent the day sitting silently in a confined booth, through their answers, indicated common traits other than their propensity to disrupt classes. Often eliciting single figure percentages, the categories 'confidence in learning', 'perceived learning capacity', and 'self-regard as a learner' consistently drew the lowest scores. The most consistent correlation between PASS responses was found in low scores (often the lowest) revealing their habitual ploy which ensured they were '**unprepared for learning**'. The aforementioned Y9 boy who accumulated 39 detentions in a short period before he left us, produced the following PASS profile:



Pupil Percentile Scores:

(N.B. Higher the percentile score the more positive the pupil attitude / self-perception)

Factor 1 - Feelings about school - .9.

Factor 2 - Perceived Learning Capability - 7.3.

Factor 3 - Self-regard as a learner - 3.1.

Factor 4 - Preparedness for learning - 2.8.

Factor 5 - Attitudes to teachers - 29.6.

Factor 6 - General work ethic - 8.

Factor 7 - Confidence in learning - 1.2.

Factor 8 - Attitude to attendance - .7.

Factor 9 - Response to curriculum demands - 4.6.

Figure 4.6



The case invites a consideration of Inclusion policies for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) which was explored in the literature review. Goodman & Burton (2010) identified long standing obstacles which impinge on adequate provision. I am interested in the ability of individuals such as these, to cope with the demands emitting from mainstream schooling and specifically, the ensuing implications for contributing to class dynamics.

Although software measuring pupils' Emotional Literacy (2003) contributed to some profiles, I began to place an emphasis on the pupils' perception of themselves as learners. I became aware of Dweck's (2000) extensive research on Self-Theories and began to tentatively use her questionnaire to further inform PASS indicators. Constructs such as self-esteem, motivation and competence (Elliot & Dweck 2005) are attributed to the beliefs one holds about intelligence and achievement. In contrast to the theory of malleable intelligence advocated by Dweck (2000), who portrayed intelligence as something which can be increased through a combination of effort and strategy, many of the IIU occupants appeared to show the traits of learners who subscribed to the theory of fixed intelligence. This mind-set reinforced the idea that ability is hereditary and draws helpless reactionary patterns to (the prospect of) failure during learning. Believing that failure to be an indictment of themselves, the helpless pattern can manifest as passive self-doubt or active disruption. As I highlighted in one profile, some pupils have learned to navigate around impending circumstances which may expose their sense of incompetence. My analysis of a Y9 male concluded:

“One aspect of the group norm behaviour is to meet up so arriving late, being under equipped and under prepared for learning. Subsequent power struggles and servicing divert from the learning process and allow him to exist in the classroom as someone significant rather than someone who is constantly failing. He fails, but on his own terms!”

Dweck's work became integral to my pedagogical approach during action research.

The diagnostic tools offered hope that they might provide an explanation for the habitual disruptive behaviour which defined the IIU's inhabitants. The vast majority's response seemed consistent with my prior knowledge of their performance. However, one profile from a Y9 boy,

produced data which was completely at odds with my experience of him. The subsequent episode highlighted the importance of combining diagnostic tools with existing reports and following up through observation.

“On Challenge Day feedback from Ms M observed B’s reluctance to join in but then to insist on taking over on his terms when he did. B displays a strong requirement for control before he allows himself to participate (on his terms)”.

Following intervention on 03/12/07 my colleague (IO) in the IIU witnessed a glimpse of his reintegration period:

“A 24 minute observation (9:20-9:44) (12/12/07) in Ms X’s Maths’ lesson clarified the reality of B’s performance. He was on-task for approximately 6 minutes which meant he was off-task for 75% of the sample observation. He shouted out on 27 occasions including demanding the teacher attended to him ‘come ‘ere and help me’. He spent time rummaging through his bag, spent much of his time doodling on his page and actively sought an audience for his antics, he was observed looking around trying to get the attention of other students. At one point he got out of his seat for 3 minutes to engage with K. This was done with a deliberate show of whistling as he strolled across by windows kicking the wall. IO summarised his 24 minute performance as aggressive and confrontational behaviour which engaged the teacher and HLTA frequently”.

Despite seemingly making progress on understanding some of the underlying needs prompting disruptive behaviour documented in profiles and action plans (which were passed to the respective Heads of House), one consistent finding compromised our work. As demonstrated above, individual pupils tended to revert back to selectively exhibiting disruptive behaviour when returning to mainstream classes after sanctions and intervention. It is pertinent to note many of the IIU’s occupants, including Pupil B (above), were consistently allocated to lower sets which formed a substantial percentage of their curriculum time. The potential significance was considered in the literature review.

#### **4.2.4: Staff dis-empowerment**

It is only in retrospect I now reconsider the detrimental impact of my decision to personally administer the consequences of disruptive behaviour on behalf of staff. I now realise that the daily reinforcement of my authority through sanctions may, in the eyes of detainees, have heightened the contrast between those teachers deemed worthy of compliance and those waiting back in the classrooms, deemed as unworthy. As one habitual offender (Ex A) commented when reflecting back on his time as a pupil attending detentions, I (and select others) were able to “keep him in line” due to his ‘respect’ for us. Two other young men (Ex B & C) attributed their compliance to the perception that “the teacher knows me” and the requirement for the teacher to be “important... up there”. The issue had previously been raised in a summarizing consultation with Middle Leaders (2007) regarding their participation in detentions:

“We have many talented and established staff whose influence is not being utilized. Some staff have used the phrase ‘disempowered’... simply passing issues on acts to dissociate some staff with the consequences / solutions”.

As I engage in the process of writing this chapter, I re-experience the acute psychological state which held me and feel a sense of release that other people now have the responsibility. However, in 2007 as I began to organize colleagues’ contribution to detentions, I could not tolerate any deviation from established protocols and was troubled over any action I deemed to be inconsistent with my standards.

As I unfolded a range of initiatives around the school there was no question in my mind of the validity of the methods I implemented and I prided myself on taking a visible lead. Inevitably there were some who did not follow my example - the ‘old fashioned’ few who neglected to adhere to new directives. I inwardly held this group liable for undermining my efforts. I interpreted their apparent level of non-commitment as indicative of whether or not they cared about the children or took the job seriously (Day et al. 2006). There were others who did not seem able to cope with implementing and enforcing strategies. I perceived these colleagues as

weak. My response to this cohort wavered between a desire to help and momentary feelings of contempt.

In response to inconsistencies I readily channelled my frustration by becoming increasingly obsessive about ensuring agreed standards and procedures were abided by. I became perturbed by any child being out of class without a 'Corridor Pass'. In the name of consistency I frequently escorted children back to the offending teacher in full view of their class. I would deliberately seek to catch colleagues out, confronting them if they allowed their class to leave before the bell; I would wander the school and question any pupil who had been sent out of class, or found in the corridors. It was clear to me, that despite training, staff remained variable in their use and application of the policy I constructed and implemented.

The Ofsted report (2004) had affirmed the problem I was determined to address: "Some teachers are not yet using the sanctions outlined in the recently revised behaviour policy as consistently as they should" (2004: p.11). As Roach's submission cautioned, "...having a policy and what happens in practice are two very different things" (House of Commons Education Committee 2011: p.26) (HCEC). I did not have the awareness to inquire why this might be.

The indifference I displayed towards colleagues slowly came to consciousness in the early months of research in 2009. Informed by critical theory, despite relinquishing my role I began to realise I was still complicit in sustaining a culture of suspicion and judgement. I began to notice and record subliminal reactions which had previously gone undetected. Now mindful of Foucault's (1977) discourse about disciplinary apparatus and self-surveillance I wrote.

"Tues 20/01/09:

On duty - bright fluorescent jackets for all staff. The duty team leader saw I was where I was meant to be - from a distance. Secure in that knowledge I found myself looking out for other staff who should also be on duty. Felt like a policemen - 'supervising the supervisors'.

Illustrative of the culture I was instrumental in developing, Foucault's description of the workings of power encapsulates the inner bondage I progressively chose. As Brookfield (2008: p.135) wrote: "...a single gaze... [ensures] those being surveyed are aware that at any time they may be subject to invisible scrutiny".

#### **4.2.5: Inner emotions**

My inner turbulence manifested in different forms. The burden of self-expectation and sustaining my assigned status was a heavy one. I did not make this state apparent to others but instead continued to operate through the veneer of a model practitioner and disciplinarian.

In 2004 I was Head of Department, an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) one day a week, still B & A consultant one day a week, and Lead Teacher for the school's response to behavioural issues. My classroom performance became increasingly subject to the diverse roles I held concurrently, often resulting in a feeling that teaching was getting in the way of my job. However, I was still capable of performing to a high standard in my capacity as a Religious Education (RE) teacher. An Ofsted inspection in the autumn term of 2004 saw me observed four times with four different year groups. The recognition of my performance was recorded in a card from the Head-teacher:

"... To teach four out of four excellent lessons is a superb achievement of which you should be very proud."

Unfortunately the sentiment does not come close to appreciating the cost associated with the external expectations I had come to internalize. It does not portray the psychological state I endured the evening before the inspection. A state so acute I could not remember the access code to my computer. Mildly panicking I phoned a colleague to enquire if there was any other way to gain admission to the device I used daily. There was no intimation of the anxiety as I stood with a staffroom full of colleagues on the Monday morning ready to be introduced to the inspection team. I gave no hint of the relief upon learning my subject inspector would not join the team until later that day, as my morning lessons were anything but excellent. Those conveying sincere congratulations were oblivious to the main reason why my lessons were so

successful; they were the product of my regularly replaying the content continuously upon waking in the middle of the night until I fell asleep exhausted just before the alarm clock was due to go off. My performances were near faultless as a result of excessive mental rehearsal. The perfectionist trait was one that was absent earlier on in my career, but was now a prerequisite to my operational role. I felt nothing other than relief that I had achieved the grades expected of the school's AST. Ball's (2003: p.221) article 'The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity' now resonates as he described:

“A kind of values schizophrenia is experienced by individual teachers where commitment, judgement and authenticity within practice are sacrificed for impression and performance”.

Although lessons became subsidiary in importance, the perfectionist trait could not tolerate performance which slipped below very good, despite increasingly limited time to physically prepare. This is significant in recognizing the strain under which I consistently performed and therefore provides a perspective for the outbursts when I perceived a pupil was trying to sabotage my lesson.

Brookfield's (2008) application of Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony to education provided an insightful revelation. Widening my understanding of ideology, hegemony, on a political level, refers to pervasive ideas which sustain the self-interests of those who have power over the education system ensuring it runs efficiently and profitably. Althusser (1971) made reference to the repressive state apparatus which purports the natural, preordained state of institutions, such as schools, and works in their best interests. Discussion of capitalism and inequality as part of this broad canvass was part of the literature review. A consideration of how the concept might be relevant to my condition was profound in my decision to amend this study's proposal. Brookfield (2008) unerringly named my experience within the institution of education. He explained how hegemony leads to one taking pride in apparently selfless devotion; a perverse pride in exhaustion; learning to love servitude; a willingness to sacrifice mental and physical health to the cause of student learning or institutional good; hegemony manipulates as dedication and hard work comes to equate to an obligation to “squeeze two or three jobs into

the space where one would fit comfortably” (p.103); “a state of burnout becomes a sign of commitment to your vocation” (p.102). Doerr (2009), building on the insight of Varenne (2007), argued that acknowledgment of ignorance is a productive moment that pushes one to ponder what one might do with a previously unnoticed object in one’s environment.

Hegemony alerts to the process in which we learn to embrace a system of beliefs and practices which end up harming us; ideology is embedded and lived out on a daily basis, hegemony, subtle and elusive, saturates (Williams 1977). I recognized my embracement of this concept constantly left me feeling as though I was on the brink, as I took pride in my level of commitment. Increasingly intolerant of those who fell short of my ‘standards’, emotional outbursts were indicative of the inner tension I bore.

**Outbursts:** Though not apparent when subject to observations, up until the beginning of 2009, I had tendencies to ‘explode’ with anger to incidents of challenge. In addition, I would, all too easily, employ traits which would undermine the confidence of children by the use of sarcasm and thoughtless comment. Sylvester (2011) associated such conduct with bullying, defined by Olweus’ (1993) as repeated, intentional, and within the context of an unequal power relationship. Whether administered knowingly, or unintentionally, I now recognise the validity of this term. Absurdly it was to my surprise that older and past students would reveal to me how ‘scared’ they were of me during my lessons when they were younger - before they got to know me better. These elements naturally remained obscured from all external assessments of my performance.

An entry into my reflexive research diary in October 2010 provides an introspective review of the ploys I utilized to relieve the inner pressure I carried:

“I didn’t seem to have the psychological shortcomings I associated with stress although a related aspect of the condition, anger, was very much part of my ‘performance’ as an authority figure. Genuine or feigned the emotion had become an established part of my armoury. Evidently, on reflection, this was perceived, indeed experienced, as strength for it embodied my power and eliminated any inkling of weakness in my psyche. Whilst it would manifest in incidents of tension and conflict I would only make tenuous,

momentary links to stress as my assertion through outburst would always serve to reassert my dominance. Momentary loss of self-control worked to my advantage. Beyond this trait, when things were as I liked them, ordered with the pupils patently self-controlled in my presence – compliant, I was widely perceived to be a ‘good bloke’. I was ‘strict but fair’ – ‘but kids wouldn’t want to mess with me’. My very presence upon entering a room could bring chaos to a hushed silence – I was someone who could control the ‘kids’! I was yet to question the validity of this ability or ‘success’.

One such incident which illustrates my capacity to ‘act’ angrily involved a Year 10 pupil who had joined the school from Birmingham. His profile warned of a troubled past and he soon became acquainted with the like-minded students we already had on roll. Swann et al. (1992) recognised the propensity to gravitate toward people who affirm one’s self-identity as a fundamental feature of social interaction. Upon confronting his ‘antics’ as he frequented the group, I found to my extreme irritation that he seemed immune to my status and reputation having been denied experience of me in his younger years. His open defiance in front of his peers was not something I was prepared to tolerate in my position as Lead Teacher for Behaviour. I arranged for the Deputy Head to collect him from his form base and escort him to my office. They arrived with the boy clearly smug. Standing in the doorway I turned and with an open palm hit the door with such force it slammed into the filing cabinets behind it. Barely containing my ‘rage’ I spelt out in no uncertain terms what would happen if he dared try his luck with me again. The desired effect was instant. He was reduced to a shocked and compliant pupil. Upon leaving I reverted back and winked at the Deputy who it seems was also convinced my ‘performance’ was for real. Although in control on this occasion I reflect the source dictating the nature of my dealing came from issues around power. I deliberately sought out the pupil with his peers the next day; they observed a transformed exchange from the previous day. My reputation was restored.

On another occasion the same door was witness to goading I was subjected to from a Year 8 boy. This time my anger was not feigned and the open hand became a fist as I turned from the student and punched a hole clean through the door. Obedience was immediate, the incident



added to my reputation. The student was eventually expelled and news came back that he ended up hitting a teacher at his new school. I deliberate whether I contributed in any way to that event. The mind-set I had developed extinguished any inkling of being scared of disruptive pupils.

The period depicted captures something of the practice and mentality of an experienced, effective teacher with multiple responsibilities. It represents my professional identity; it conveys my use of power as an adult entrusted with the growth and well-being of other people's children. The inner threats emerge in the form of feeling incompetent, being unprepared, being less than excellent, not being able to control the situation, others (students and staff who affect my role and performance), my teaching space, and most of all, not being able to control myself in the face of challenge.

Kitching (2009) argued the concept of emotional labour indicates that teachers, in light of discourses as moral/caring agent, expert and purveyor of social control/social efficiency, not only have to present a certain emotional front, they must act as role models. Producing this 'front' is a key part of their role. I experienced an internal discrepancy between authentic emotion in the form of frustration and anger, and inauthentic performance in front of observers. I recognise the discontinuity between the script that my professional role demands and what I felt. I am acutely aware of the façade I habitually performed when other adults were present.

#### **4.3: Intermediate reflection**

My initial proposal for PhD was written whilst still embroiled in this inconsistent, inauthentic state. I came to acknowledge deeply engrained habits too often rendered my good intentions impotent. Each of these traits is addressed through this study. DePalma et al. (2011) argued that:

“Recognizing the ways in which teachers’ roles are inextricably bound with the disciplinary power relations of their institutions can help alleviate frustration and burnout and help teachers make more informed pedagogical decisions”.

My action research is mindful of Zembylas (2003) investigation of how teachers' emotions contribute to professional identity. I hold to his view that such instances have the capacity to become sites of resistance and self-transformation. Woods & Carlyle's (2002) study examined the notion of identity passage during a time of stress. Exploring how extreme, negative emotions involved at all stages of psychological pressure are socially structured; they offered exemplars from interviews conveying teachers' accounts. I recognise aspects which speak of losing all ontological security:

"I didn't feel like myself at all. I couldn't recognise myself' (Rebecca). 'It's almost as though I didn't exist. I couldn't believe that I was the person I was' (Andrew). 'You lose yourself when things are going badly. I lost myself for seven months' (Marcus). 'I wasn't me. The personality just gets wiped out, the person you think of as you' (Maureen)" (p.176).

My resignation from strategic responsibility in the school, in Turner & Turner's (1979/2011: p.249) words, "stripped of status and authority... much of what has been bound by social structure is liberated..." Post withdrawal from my position as Lead Teacher for Behaviour, whilst I did not sink to the depths of despair conveyed by Woods & Carlyle's subjects, I felt its shadow despite still being esteemed as consistently effective. The experience of liberation would come to encompass the arduous process I document in Chapter Six. Through this study I partake in 'cocooning' – a process of "turning inward to take stock, to find your own basic values" (Hudson 1991: p.69), to rediscover the "essential self" (Woods & Carlyle's 2002: p.176).

Thus I probe further into my autobiography to extract clues about the origins of behaviours I display as an adult. The construction of an 'identity' and the compulsion to live out constructed life stories (Gill 1997) outside of conscious awareness (Barrow 2002) are of primary interest. I seek to address the script-bound tendencies which have a propensity to undermine my best efforts. I wish "to learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently" (Foucault, 1985: p.9).

Emergent insights are theorized through the psychodynamic concept of transference (Weiss 2002). These contribute to my analysis of critical moments within action research.

#### **4.4: Summary**

At this point I offer a framework of my gradual absorption of implicit and explicit messages, which informed my understanding of what it meant to be a teacher, or more accurately: an authority figure.

As I engage in action research I am mindful of the impediments to self-narration: “the episodes, experiences and thoughts that do not enter consciousness, yet still exert an influence” (Clarke 2007 p.188). The prolonged reflexive process alerted me to the potential contribution of subjective influences from my childhood, subtle situational forces, and my propensity to absorb hegemonic messages enshrined within the structure I work in. These have been identified as likely saboteurs to my study’s aim.

My reflection on the research context, highlighted issues which I needed to explore further in this thesis:

1. That individual pupils reverted back to disruptive behaviour upon reintegration after sanctions and intervention;
2. That pupils tended to amend conduct according to situational context;
3. That staff tended to abandon skills cognitively accepted during training, in favour of previous ‘ineffective’ strategies;
4. That by adopting a position as proxy for colleagues, I disempowered them and reinforced the idea of hierarchy in the eyes of detainees.

The first two factors justify examining the nature of interaction and conflict between teacher and pupil within the setting of the dynamic classroom. In Baranger’s (2001 p.10) words, “If you study only a head, or only a trunk, or only a leg, you will never understand walking”. The importance of context and emergent behaviour within groups is considered next in Chapter Five. The third point prompts an acknowledgment that I too often abandoned skills I espoused, in favour of quick fix strategies - this is integral to research in Chapter Six. In response to the

fourth finding, the study ensures my methods extend beyond my own practice to incorporate colleagues in Chapter Seven.

Fundamentally, I explore the view that both the child and the adult are mere 'pawns' who, on occasion, dispute the restricted semblance of power afforded to them according to their roles and status. Perturbing outcomes of these exchanges might be termed pupil resistance and challenge. Such occurrences easily equate to perceptions that this is 'the' problem. I regard such incidents as catalysts for alerting the reader to a more profound problem of which disruptive behaviour is a tangible symptom: a system defined by tensions. Providing critical perspectives, these major themes were integral to the literature review and contribute to my process of reconceptualization as I emerge from my insular experience of schooling.

## **Chapter Five: Action Research, Reconnaissance Phase.**

### **5.1: The context**

My project is an example of how control in school works, and queries whether there is a proper balance between authority and the development of pupil self-control. For two years I investigated this question ethnographically as reconnaissance to inform the action phase. These perspectives then combined to shape research with colleagues for a further two years. My school, a comprehensive of 900 pupils with a Sixth Form, was rated Grade 2 by Ofsted who described pupil behaviour as 'good' in each of the three inspections pertinent to this study. It has a very small proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and a higher than average proportion of Romany Traveller pupils. The proportion claiming free school meals is consistently below average, and the proportion with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities is broadly average.

### **5.2: The fieldwork: 'In-school' research**

This aspect of research represents the study's second objective stated in 1.7: *to better understand contextual factors which influence whether my pupils are more or less likely to disrupt learning*. Talbert et al. (1993: p.46) defined 'context' as "any of the diverse and multiple environments or conditions that intersect with the work of teachers and teaching". In this study it refers to performance in individual classrooms as pupils interact with peers and teachers. Multiple responses are presented as a collective consciousness or 'hive mind' (Kelly 1994). Morrison (2008: p.22) denoted the collective mind as a "composite of the biological brain and the cultural and symbolic environment in which each constantly influences and adapts to the other".

I draw on my observation of school life as a participant, recording ethnographically (based on observations, qualitative questionnaires and interviews) how pupils behave in different contexts, and reflecting auto-ethnographically on my own role in selected events. I also draw on school documentation which records challenging behaviour indicating individuals' periodic

rejection of school norms, and I describe circumstances which prompt degrees of resistance. Incurring disciplinary procedures, these expressions are illustrative of both counter-culture and anti-culture. I also examine the factors influencing group dynamics which elicit a compliant, docile response from pupils. Each of these elements represents hindrances to cooperative learning and relationships which I aim to encourage during the action research. This is described in Chapter Six where I scrutinise the nature of contestation between myself, as teacher, and *individual students* exhibiting both active and passive obstructive behaviour in my lessons.

In this chapter the subtleties integral to shaping *collective* behaviour within localised climates is revealed through pupils articulating specific aspects of their experience of classrooms within the school. 'Climate' described by Fraser (1989: p.307) as a "'subtle and nebulous notion', embracing "'ambience, tone, atmosphere and ethos'", is defined here as the foreground of pupils' perceptions of the school's culture, which conveys its broad beliefs and values (Burke & Litwin 1992). Lewin's (1951) classic field theory formularised the exchange of environment (E) and personality (P) as indication of a person's function (F) or behaviour. I demonstrate Araújo's (2005) argument that the 'disrupted' are capable of being 'disruptive'. I argue that children's capacity to discern differences within climates equates to pupils periodically adjusting their standards of performance within the confines of a single school.

Presented data does not differentiate according to SEN, FSM (Free School Meals), or academic ability, therefore contextual factors such as physical environment, peer pressure, the credibility / influence of individual teachers, and engagement with learning tasks are presented as crucial. The existence of sanctions is also considered as a contributory factor to understanding the behavioural choices made by pupils. Analysis and discussion explores how the interaction between these variables underpins the classroom climate and impacts on the relational dynamic.

This current chapter identifies responses according to Year group and gender to emphasize that both of the divergent categories of group expression (termed 'compliance' and 'resistance') are experienced, in various degrees, by the majority of the school population. For the purposes of analysis, those adults occupying positions of authority are labelled and depersonalised through general reference to 'strong'/'senior' staff, and 'weak'/'cover' teachers, in accordance with the terminology pupils used. Paradoxically, I intend to scrutinize and disrupt discourses which apply erroneous terms to describe pupils and teachers according to their perceived performance – 'good/bad'; 'strong/weak'. I will show that these labels are simplistic and inaccurate. This chapter provides a platform for pupils' voices. Building on the broad categories (challenge, compliance and resistance) outlined imminently, the inquiry proceeds to report on pupils' responses to hypothetical scenarios which disturb pupils' assumptions as 'senior' staff enter the group's domain as cover teachers (see 5.8.3).

The data in this chapter is obtained from a number of instruments – pupil questionnaires, an examination of school documentation, extracts from my diary blog, and interviews with pupils and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). I search out elements which might impede my intention to create a more democratic classroom climate. Additionally, I am interested to extend my understanding of the pupils I include in my research, enabling them to make comparative estimates of their general performance around the school and their specific performance in my lessons. Otherwise, their portrayal of, and my representation of their behaviour will be unnecessarily limited.

The examination of power is theorised through a number of inter-related theories. In addition to Critical Theory, Identity Theory and Role Theory (presented earlier), here I draw predominately on Social Identity Theory to comprehend pupils' behaviour when they are part of different classes. Sherriff (2007) argued social identity theory can provide a useful and important conceptual framework for understanding some boys' masculinity performances in school. This seems especially pertinent when considering school detention data. Tajfel's work (1959, 1969) on the social self through inter-group relations and group processes has its roots

in social psychological theory (Hogg et al. 1995). Burke (2004) made links between identities and social structures – whether social structure is conceived as roles and group membership, or tied to an organisation. Beech (2011) conceptualised the state of in-between-ness and ambiguity as liminal. The intricate adjustments experienced by pupils occupying these positions as they negotiate disciplinary procedures, represent the chapter’s thread.

### **5.3: Structure of the research**

To comprehend the spectrum of pupil conduct, I present students’ self-evaluations of their relative performance in the different classes they attend. Questions do not ask pupils to distinguish between their experience in ability set / mixed ability classes. Claxton (2008) drew on Reid et al. (1981) to argue that the key determinant was not the method of grouping – whether streaming or mixed-ability, the best results depended on whether teachers implementing the system believed in it or not. In accordance, Chapter Six will query the significance of mixed ability *teaching* and the nature of learning to extend the inquiry beyond the coverage of this chapter. Pupils’ estimates depicting their general behaviour in other lessons are communicated using percentages, which are then qualified and scrutinized to draw out themes for further analysis. These were used to direct cycles of inquiry and to inform the approaches I was trialling in my own classroom. I begin to organise my thoughts and explanations through an emergent diagram which represents the core organisational principles of complexity theory.



### 5.3.1: Explicit and implicit boundaries

I initially divide responses into two polarised positions which denote pupil behaviour.

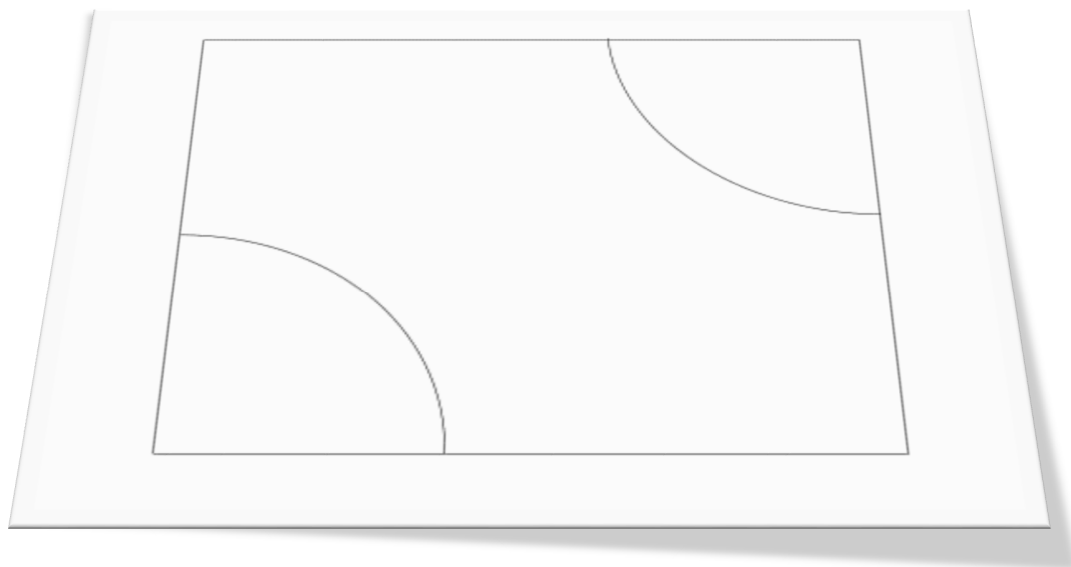


Diagram 5.1: 'Dynamic Boundaries'

On one extreme, to the right, I present behaviours deemed by staff to have 'crossed the line', thus instigating the school's detention system (see section 5.5). The opposing section is representative of conduct which might be defined as 'order' (see 5.6). Thus the sector on the left highlights conditions in which pupils recognize certain staff as being representative of boundaries, thus limiting the likelihood of them exhibiting behaviour which triggers detentions or even contestation. In particular, I interrogate the mannerisms of authority figures using their position to assert, or even to dominate. Both of these polarised sectors suggest a degree of clarity – conduct which has happened and is unacceptable, and conversely, individuals' self-discipline, influenced by interpreting cues which are likely to deter such events from happening. Here, the combination of authority figure and the threat of sanctions symbolise and induce self-constraint from the majority of pupils. This response is regardless of their level of interest in the prescribed curriculum matter.

### **5.3.2: Extended self-boundaries**

The middle ground and its various gradients (presented progressively and detailed in 5.7) are of particular interest to this study for this is fertile ground for low level disruptive behaviour to occur. It charts the multiple occasions where pupils report that boundaries are less clear, where the authority of the teacher is contested, and the assertion of the adult is deemed inconsistent and less effective. The description of events in 5.7 contrasts with the 'effectiveness' of select authority figures associated with classroom order (see 5.6). The 'zone' represents the testing ground which may or may not lead to transparent discipline procedures despite pupils' comparative behaviour being recognised as unacceptable by other teachers who administered sanctions (see 5.5.3). I investigate whether these abstruse occasions contain micro cues which steer dynamics when authority is not acknowledged and sanctions no longer act as a deterrent. These situations invite an examination of the intricate nuances which, I argue, have the capacity to compromise each individual child's self-boundaries when they are part of a group. Pupils indicate many of these subtle indicators are learned from the mannerisms of the teacher whose performance, or very presence, can either induce recognition of authority (see 5.6), or else render it obsolete (5.7). I aim to utilize these insights as I move from my previous position of authoritarian assurance, akin to status conveyed in 5.6, to negotiate interactions within a zone of comparative uncertainty as greater pupil autonomy is encouraged. Operating within this potentially precarious central section I intend to show that flexibility need not equate to inconsistency, encouraging pupils to use their relative freedom to contribute to a positive classroom climate.

## **5.4: Organisation of data**

In this section I expand on the Methods section (Chapter 3) to explain the way in which the raw data was organised for the purpose of analysis.

### **5.4.1: Questionnaires - results and analysis**

Answers to individual questions are initially presented through graphics to provide an overview and to highlight trends and stimulate further investigation. Percentages in the text are recorded to the second decimal so to be consistent with the calculations shown on the graphs. A summary of pupil responses to questions posed is given, with brief comments. The findings in each section are then analysed and discussed to culminate in a trustworthy representation of school culture at the end of the chapter. This will provide context for Action Research in my own classroom, as I consider how the findings are relevant and ponder the implications for my intention to harness greater democracy in my practice, and to inform subsequent CPD.

Responses from 14 classes were collated into graphs and 10 of these classes contributed data for the pie charts presented in this chapter. Each of the classes were 'mixed ability' so responses were likely to draw upon experiences within the setting spectrum. As specified previously, group members were not distinguished by attainment levels or other categories. Six of the classes were Y7, one Y8, five Y9s and two from Y10. Years 7 and 8 were taught for the full academic year; Year 9 and 10 classes for one and a half terms each.

If your behaviour was weather... would it be:






Blue Skies (BS) 'sunshine'	White Clouds (WC)		Grey Clouds (GC)	Rain Clouds (RC)
				
you are motivated to do well, helpful, respectful and cause no disruptions to learning	you are not very disruptive but tend to be unmotivated		represent when you tend to join in with disruptive behaviour if others are doing it and you think you can get away with it; this is usually in the form of low level disruptions like calling out, talking over the teacher etc.	this represents a determined effort not to learn, to disrupt the lesson and make things difficult for your teacher
		Place a % to indicate your usual behaviour in <u>other classes</u> e.g. if you were mostly motivated and caused no disruptions you could put 85% under BS and 15% in the WC		

Diagram 5.2

### 5.4.2: Summary of responses

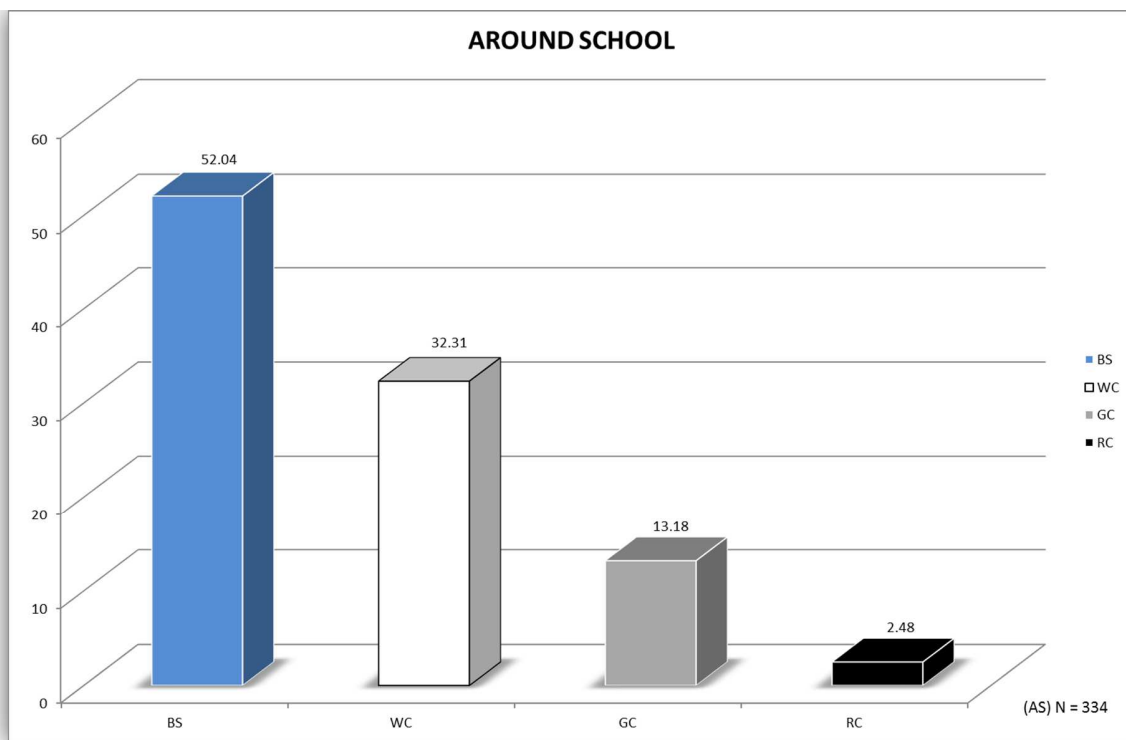


Diagram 5.3

Of the 348 replies to this question 14 were spoiled because of this replies did not add up to 100 per cent.

In line with Ofsted judgements of 'good' (2008 & 2011), results indicate for the majority of time pupils' habitual behaviour did not *actively* obstruct learning (BS + WC = 82.35). However, whilst the Blue Sky (BS) behaviour symbolises cooperative relations with staff and engagement with tasks, the White Cloud (WC) behaviour suggests more than a third of all exhibited behaviour, denoting self-control, was defined by conformity and compliance. This may manifest into passive obstructive behaviours such as helplessness and dependency which are traits I proceed to explore in my own classes (Chapter Six). The graph may initially be read to support the use of erroneous terms applied to children, such as 'majority' and 'minority' (Steer 2005), however,

each category of behaviour is not confined to individual pupils. Rain Cloud (RC) is not to be personified to 2.48 of pupils. Each participant's estimation considered the proportion of *time* they showed these traits within a typical week e.g. a self-reporting pupil who usually displays Blue Sky behaviour may have different lessons where they withdraw their goodwill and simply conform (WC), or engage in distracting ploys (GC), or even have confrontational incidents (RC). Likewise, a child habitually exhibiting Rain Cloud behaviours around the school may demonstrate Blue Sky qualities with certain teachers.

Quantifiable estimates are limited in that they do not convey the diverse comparative nature of pupils' variable experience within the same school, year group, or even subject. For example: a Y7 child whose timetable dictates they are in Maths Set 1, is taught by the specialist Dance teacher and happens to have the Head of Department for Humanities is likely to report differently to a peer who is in Maths Set 5 with a core of disaffected peers, has a covering teacher for a long term absentee in Dance, and is taught by a non-specialist for Humanities.

#### **5.4.3: Break down of results**

Diagrams 36 & 37 in Chapter 6 will show how Whole School data was divided according to gender, and reveals responses from different Year groups (7-10). The breakdown for each individual class contributing to this chapter is presented in Appendix 6K to illustrate pupils' comparative estimates with their typical behaviour in my lessons. Each set of approximations, indicated by graphic representations, were accompanied by pupils' qualitative answers, which are presented throughout Chapters 5 & 6.

To see whether pupils' modified their behaviour according to context, I began to analyse data to see if students' self-evaluations supported this premise.

#### 5.4.4: Dark Cloud behaviour

This broad term is inclusive of pupils' engagement in any behaviour which is deemed to be actively obstructive to learning (Grey Cloud/Rain Cloud). Just using the weather categories, out of the 334 valid replies, 80 pupils' figures disputed their involvement in ANY Dark Cloud conduct.

Self-evaluation: 0% for displaying Dark Cloud behaviour around school						
	M		F		SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
6 Classes Y7 (2009/10) n: 157	10		27			
					37	
1 Class Y8 n: 30	1		3			
					4	
5 Classes Y9 n: 97	12		14			
					26	
2 Classes Y10 n: 50	10		3			
					13	
N: 334						80

Table 5.1

Of the 37 Y7s who subscribed to a position of non-involvement with active disruption, I was unable to scrutinise 16 further. This latter figure was from a cohort of 105 pupils making up four of the six Y7 classes, and was due to them not being able to partake in a follow up question.

This was an oversight on my part. Their analysis was limited to the Table below which highlights a stark difference according to gender.

Self-evaluation: 0% for displaying Dark Cloud behaviour					
	M		F		SUB TOTAL
4 out of 6 Y7 Classes (2010/11) N: 105	1		15		
		1		15	
					16

Table 5.2

Subsequent questions to the 10 other participating classes, sought to affirm the validity of those pupils, including the 21 Y7s contributing to the remaining total of 64 who submitted answers disputing any association with Dark Cloud behaviour. I wished to see if initial Weather estimates, indicating absolute non-involvement in disruptive behaviour, would be sustained if I rephrased the question. The Weather inquiry was situated near the beginning of the questionnaire, whilst two additional questions were posed towards the end so to return to the issue afresh.

Pupils were asked what percentage they:

- a) Witnessed disruption in their classes around the school;
- b) Joined in with the disruption.

Disruption was defined on the questionnaire as 'chatting, ignoring instructions, failure to begin tasks, getting distracted etc.' Each of the questions invited an estimate from 100% to zero%.



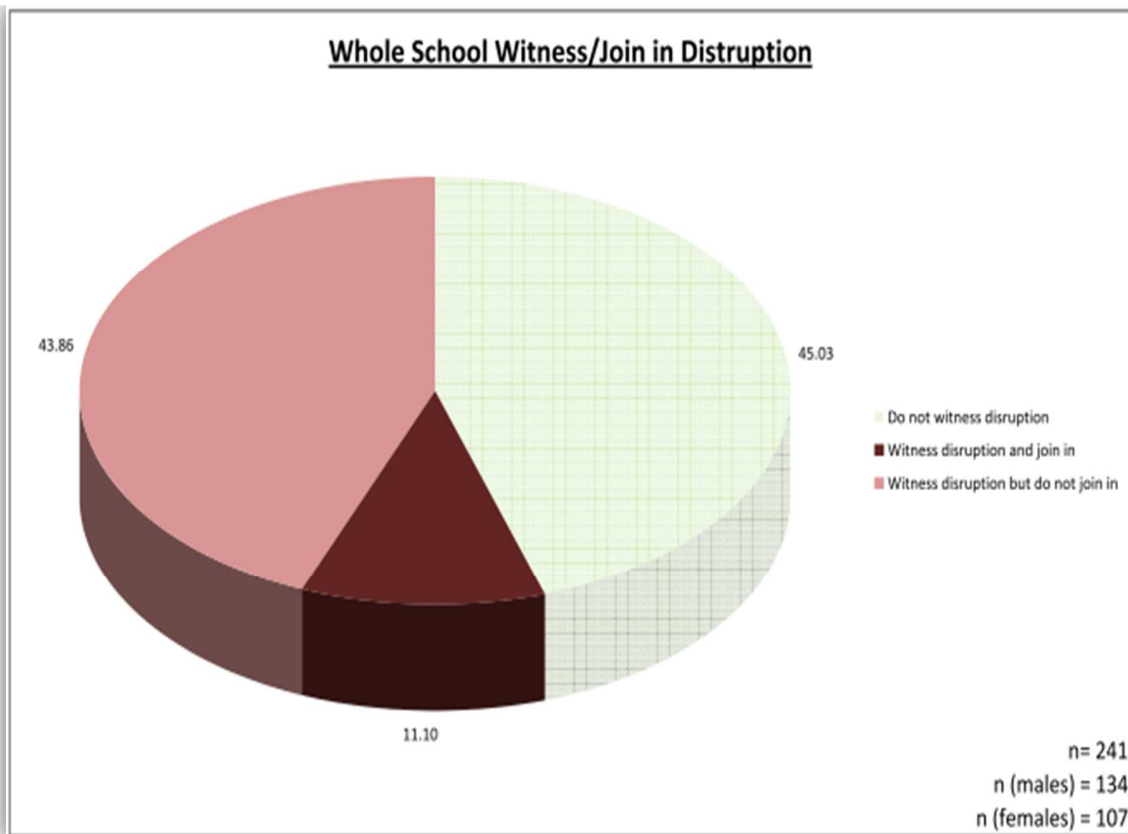


Diagram 5.4

The light segment of the pie chart does *not* indicate specific lessons where disruption does *not* happen, but instead a collective estimation of *time* in which their learning commences without being disrupted. In fact every one of the 241 participants in the 10 classes witnessed disruption in their lessons to some degree. The polarised estimates ranged from observing 100% disruption from 4 pupils (2 Y9 males; 2 Y7s, one male, one female) to 2%. This baseline figure was one of only three returns which estimated a single digit (all Y9s, one male, two females). Thirty pupils, from across the age range and evenly distributed by gender, recorded scores of 90% or higher.

The figures suggest collectively, students had to contend with disruptive behaviour for more than half of the time they spent in lessons (54.96%). 43.86% of that occurrence did not draw

the pupil in. This alludes to notions of self-control. The teacher's influence in bringing about this response or any other reasons for restraint such as the threat of sanctions, peer pressure, engagement with subject matter, and perception of the teacher was the subject of subsequent inquiry. Research does not comment on internal motivational factors, such as ambition or values which may influence the child's personal restraint.

From the 241 pupils who returned a legible reply to the follow-up question, I was able to further scrutinize original Weather estimates from the pupils who indicated their own conduct was devoid of initiating or joining in with disruption (64 of the original 80).

Self-evaluate 0% for displaying Dark Cloud behaviour around school						Self-evaluate ‘not joining in’						
	M		F		SUB TOTAL	TOTAL	M		F		SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
2 Classes Y7 (2009/10) n: 52	9		12				6		7			
					21						13	
1 Class Y8 n: 30	1		3				1		2			
					4						3	
5 Classes Y9 n: 108	12		14				2		5			
					26						7	
2 Classes Y10 n: 51	10		3				0		0			
					13						0	
N: 241						64						23

Table 5.3

The results show that, of the 64 pupils who did not associate at all with the descriptors of GC/RC behaviour, only 23 maintained they did not join in with disruptive behaviour when it occurred. Of the 41 students who amended their absolute estimate, all did so by recording a very low percentage typically between 1 and 5%. Supporting Araújo's (2005) argument, overall, there was strong evidence the 'disrupted' were, on occasion, however infrequent, also capable of being 'disruptive'.

Pupils' estimates of their own conduct show, for the majority of time, pupils were versed in tolerating classroom climates which were not conducive to learning (Diagram 5.4 above) and with many being passively unmotivated (Diagram 5.3). Of the 80 pupils who originally claimed no affinity with Dark Cloud conduct (Table 5.1), 75 of those had also indicated compliant WC behaviour. Subsequently, only four children from Y7 (two male, two female), and a girl from Y9 considered their performance to be 100% cooperative. Of the 334 surveyed, only 3 others submitted 0% for WC. Combined, these statistics suggest the vast majority of pupils, to various degrees, were unmotivated at some point and were liable to participate in low level GC behaviour if circumstances allowed.

The figure 43.86% denoting observed disruption in Diagram 5.4 alludes to witnessing the collective antics of numerous peers, suggesting a discrepancy with the comparative low percentage given for joining in. However, 5.4.5 (below) indicates the 11.1% segment is skewed by the presence of a few prominent classmates who were habitually disruptive. The low total implies most pupils believed themselves to be responsible for only a minimal amount of disruption, if any at all. Only one pupil (Y7 male) considered his behaviour to be 100% Dark Clouds (i.e. GC+RC). The minority figure of 11.1% affirms the stated emphasis on the prominence of selective low level disruption. I aim to demonstrate that the vast majority of pupils are susceptible to some degree in contributing to unproductive classroom climates as they negotiate their weekly timetable, but are just as likely to be amenable under different circumstances.

In two groups of participants (n: 334 & n: 241) there were occasions when pupils felt it 'safe' to join in with peers who were off-task. There is a consistency between the sets of figures showing the majority of pupils who displayed obstructive disruptive behaviour (Table 5.3) for a minority of the time (11.1% - Diagram 5.4). Using data from Diagram 3, Section 5.4.5 (below) suggests this manifests through a 'significant minority' initiating disruption (2.48% RC), which encouraged others to join in (13.18% GC). However, as I illustrate in AR through scrutiny of my own practice, the impact of these individual incidents, although representing a minimal percentage of the collective behaviour exhibited, can have a disproportionate negative impact on the teacher's psyche, and a detrimental effect on peers and the classroom climate.

#### **5.4.5: Rain Cloud behaviour<sup>2</sup>**

Due to the wilful, predetermined nature of RC behaviour, it is suggested that there are occasions when the teacher will be confronted with disruptive behaviour irrespective of lesson content or preventative measures they may take. These incidents appear to manifest regardless of whether their behaviour is likely to lead to a detention or not. Of this percentage a number of scores skew the total. Of the 68 pupils who recognized RC traits in their own conduct, 17 submitted estimates of 20% or more. Of these, the highest single score is 80% from a Y8 boy, followed by 50% from a Y7 and 40% from a Y9. Four students record 25% and the remaining ten plot 20% each. Of the remainder, two pupils estimated RC behaviour for 15% of their timetable and 17 wrote 10%. 36 students identifying to some degree with this category, recorded single figures suggesting an issue with an individual teacher.

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<sup>2</sup> Pupils whose self-evaluation indicated high habitual RC behaviour may be indicative of descriptors in literature alluding to backgrounds of deprivation and SEN. This study cannot substantiate or disprove this association.

Number of participants whose self-evaluation indicates degrees of involvement in Rain Cloud behaviour around the school					
	M	Sub total	F	Sub-total	Total
6 Classes Y7 n: 157	22		6		
1 Class Y8 n: 30	2		1		
5 Classes Y9 n: 97	14		13		
2 Classes Y10 n: 50	4		6		
		42 N: 175		26 N: 159	
					68 N: 334

Table 5.4

The AR is informed by the statistics which remind that even those displaying wilful disruptive behaviour, for example up to 2.48% of the time - as indicated by Diagram 5.3, might be amenable for 97.52% of the week if conditions dictated. The concept of perspective and proportion are integral to my attempts to redefine reality in the midst of classroom contestations.

### 5.5: Crossing the line

It is assumed the antics encapsulated within the RC descriptor would evoke the school's consequences system. This expectation derives from my predecessor's mandate to make the sanction system even more 'rigorous' upon taking over my role as Lead Teacher for Behaviour

in 2008 - in the Head Teacher's supportive words: "we need to raise the bar". Therefore behaviour qualifying for detentions was escalated with a 'C3' triggering removal from class and subsequent detention (rather than previously C4, signalling a detention and C5 prompting removal by colleagues who are 'on-call' - see Figure 1: 4.1). The formal terminology to state institutional boundaries, 'C' 1/2/3 was replaced during the research period with 'S' 1/2/3, as consequences became sanctions. I will proceed to use the terms as equivalents. In 2013 the second 'warning' was removed so a detention was issued at S2 after one warning. This was designed to combat "a minority of students [who] cause low level disruption" (Newsletter May 2013).

#### 5.5.1: Detention data (Sept 2008-July 2011)

Data supporting my assumption that apparent deliberate acts logically lead to official reprimand, is presented through documents detailing reasons for sanctions. Each recording of an incident warranting a detention was administered by the teacher involved. Data records I had access to did not reveal the name of the child, but instead afforded a code. This prevented an accurate identification of 'offenders' according to name, gender or subject (thus whether classroom organisation was setting or mixed ability). However, analysis of descriptive content clearly shows male pronouns outweigh female descriptors.

Term:	Number of references in Detention data
<b>He</b>	<b>1123</b>
<b>His</b>	<b>556</b>
She	415
<b>Him</b>	<b>353</b>
Her	336
N: 4059 incidents	

Table 5.5

### 5.5.2: Gender differences

Using the limited specification of the RC category in Table 4, detention data in Table 5.5 correlates with the estimation my pupils made of their own conduct. This suggested boys were more likely to exhibit wilful RC behaviour which was liable to result in detention, whilst much of girls' involvement in Dark Cloud behaviour was shown through joining in with GC conduct (Diagram 5.5 below). Although 16 more males than females were canvassed, girls appeared to be more susceptible to joining in with Grey Cloud attention-seeking behaviours. Further analysis showed this was consistently the case in data attained from pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 (see Appendix 6J). The comparative lack of consequences suggest either females ceased obstructive behaviour before C3/S3 was administered, that their attention seeking traits did not necessarily equate to detentions *in specific lessons*, or, girls were more attuned to calculating behaviour according to circumstance and the individual teacher(s) so they were more likely to 'get away with it' (as exemplified in 5.7).

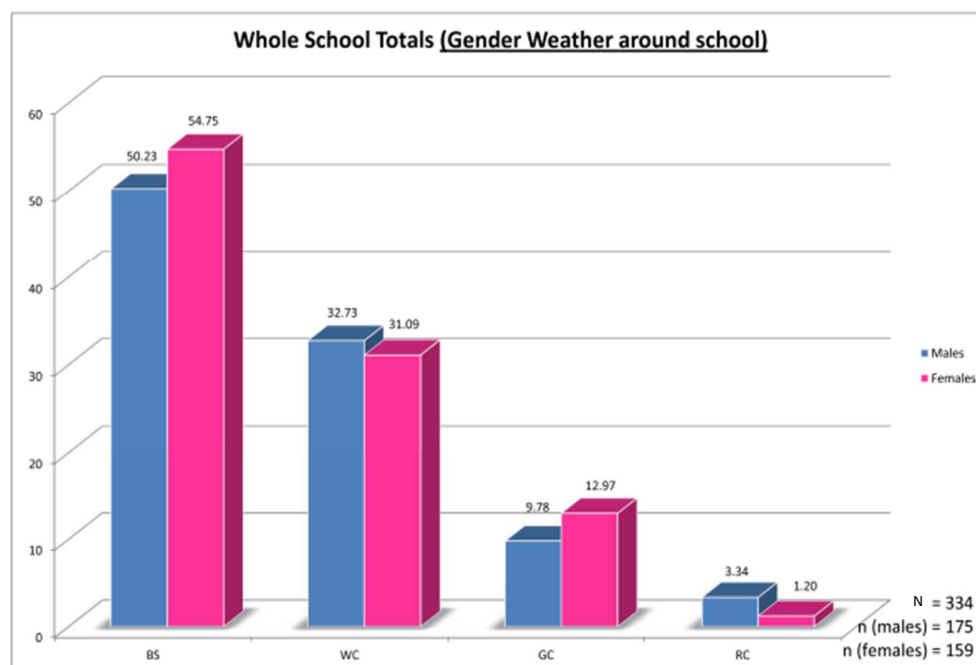


Diagram 5.5

Table 5.4 & Diagram 5.5 add weight to literature which highlights the issue of female participation in misbehaviour (Charlton 2007), whilst Table 5.5 suggests teachers may hold stereotypical expectations ensuring a discrepancy in the issuing of sanctions (Myhill & Jones 2006). My dealings with disruptive females is a feature of my action research.

### **5.5.3: Staff language conveying disruptive incidents**

Aside from scrutinising gender terms, detention data was then broken down further to extract the most frequent phrases. Prominent terms were then identified. These are categorised for convenience under the labels A-G:

#### **A:**

Refused (506 times mentioned)

Refusal (171)

Refusing (111)

Defiant (123)

#### **B:**

Rude (380)

#### **C:**

Disruptive (376)

Disruption (269)

Disrupting (143)

#### **D:**

Continually (141)

Continued (358)



Failure (117)

Stop (147)

**E:**

Asked (538)

Told (252)

Warned (211)

Warnings (193)

Instructions (185)

**F:**

Sent (205)

**G:**

Shouting (141)

Silly (209)

Messing (137)

Throwing (117)

Across (115)

Table 5.6

Table 5.6 advances a number of themes worthy of mention and further discussion. The initial terms cited (A) indicate a power struggle; which is interpreted as personal by the teacher (B). The incident is interfering with the learning process (C) and there is a sense of escalation (D) where teacher language is ineffectual in deterring the child (E). There is an indication of attempted respite as the term 'sent' is almost exclusively used in reference to being 'sent out' (F). Unsurprisingly there is no mention of SEN, setting or home circumstance as the 'offence' is detailed. The focused and emotive expression apparent in records may act to enhance teachers' acceptance of a discourse of 'badness' and contribute to teachers' efficacy beliefs,

attribution theories and subsequent levels of emotion and stress, highlighted in the literature review. The final set of descriptors gives a sense of behaviour in which the individual pupil feels very much part of the collective, and perhaps feels anonymous as antics merge and feelings of responsibility wane (G). This supposition is given further consideration in sections 5.7, 5.10 and 5.10.1. The scenarios depicted pose difficult questions regarding how an individual teacher and the school might respond to such incidents. This study concentrates on exploring the former dilemma whilst aspects of Chapters Four, Six and Seven acknowledges the capacity of 'senior' colleagues to either support or undermine staff.

#### 5.5.4: Undeterred

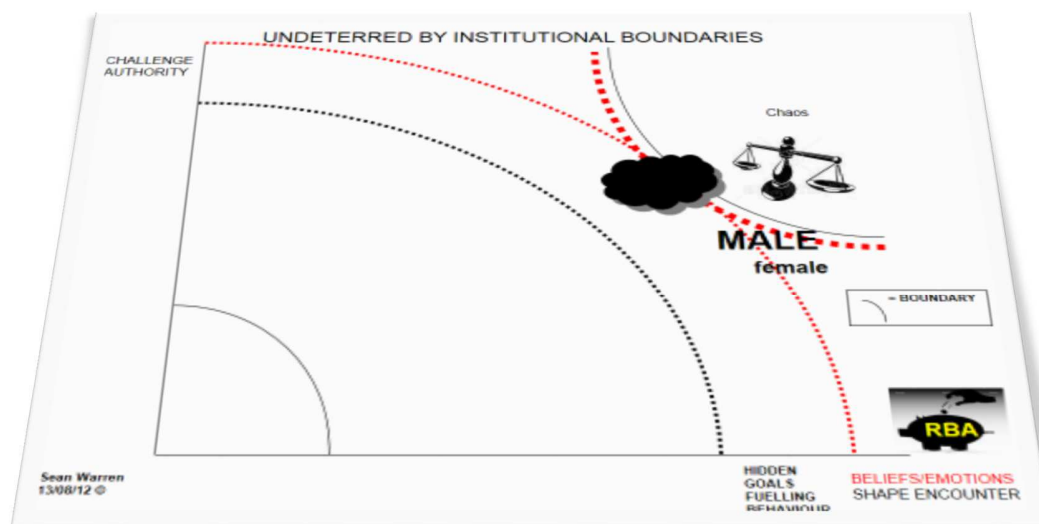


Diagram 5.6

I utilized the term chaos to signify the polar opposite of order and calmness. The phrase denotes notions of disorder, confusion and disarray which are likely to incur sanctions. The words are employed to describe the conditions contributing to an adverse classroom climate. As qualified in Chapter Six, they are also used to capture something of the inner turmoil which a teacher (and pupil) might experience when a clash of wills is accompanied by strong emotions.

The scales symbolise a loss of equilibrium in the group and individual(s) involved. Corresponding to this idea, RBA refers to what I describe as the Relationship Bank Account. It is a concept I will develop throughout the chapter. In this instance, it is very likely the incidents have resulted in a 'withdrawal' of good will / trust, which has the potential to impact negatively on future interactions. The relative sizes of the terms denoting gender are indicative of insights from the school's detention data. Allison (2013: p.14) made a distinction between "incidental boundary-crossing and boundary flouting". Illustrative of the latter, the self-confessed tendency of some pupils to deliberately provoke staff is encapsulated by the RC percentage; the volume of detention data suggested the threat of sanctions may not be enough to deter the wilful child. The episodes exemplify the notions of 'laddishness' and *counter-culture* (see 2.3).

However, the thicker red dotted line representing institutional boundaries in the form of detentions, is sometimes crossed (in part) due to organisational 'offences' which may/may not have been wilful, challenging or emotional. Further analysis of detention data shows non-moral 'offences' infringing general rules (below) were also deemed to be worthy of sanctions. Records revealed these factors were often incorporated within comments about behaviour and might be viewed as symbolic resistance to school expectations and used as stimuli to provoke contestation. This substantiated my findings regarding many pupils who attended my school's Internal Isolation Unit. It was common for them to deliberately ensure they were unprepared for learning, through lack of equipment and lateness to lessons (see 4.2.4). Yet, correspondence cited below suggests children with no intention of exhibiting disruptive behaviour may find themselves in infringement of general rules which generates the same disciplinary procedures as for peers who provoke conflict.

### 5.5.5: General offences

ISSUE:	TIMES MENTIONED:
Uniform	7
Equipment	13
Make-up	18
Chewing	25
Truancy	58
Homework	85
Lateness	150
(PE) Kit	168

Table 5.7

Subsequent to these figures, in May 2013 the school announced, as there was no clear consensus resulting from consultation with the school community regarding views on uniform change, the school would employ a stricter policy on existing school uniform. The subject had been a persistent item of contention as two emails indicated (emphasis added on both correspondences):

Date: 7 October 2010

From: PE Department

"Hi all,

Please *can I ask that you challenge* any student wearing their sports hoodie outside of P.E lessons, afterschool club or fixtures. They should not be wearing it around school and in other lessons and that they should remove it or it will be *taken away from them and their money not refunded*.

Many Thanks".

"Date: Tuesday, 7 September 2010

To: All Staff

From Deputy Head

Subject: Uniform

Apologies for this second email but there were two aspects I missed out.

1. Cardigans are not permitted at XXXX. A warning should be given but if there are repeats cardigans should be *confiscated* if worn on school premises.

2. Students are *permitted* to wear a single charity band if they wish to do so.

Many thanks for your continued support".

The directives indicate how strict appliance of general rules might inadvertently present staff as enforcers, potentially leading to unnecessary conflict and reprimand. There is also an assumption that staff supported the policy. More recent directives, detailed below, increased the potential for these non-disciplinary matters to provoke conflict among staff and pupils. As a result detentions rose steeply as the issues were repositioned as 'offences' which warranted sanctions. The Newsletter (May 2013) supplied a long list of stringent directives alongside the threat of being sent directly to the Head-teacher's Office for those who do not comply. These

children, including my daughters, whose current attire would contravene stricter standards, would be issued with a penalty card and an automatic lunchtime detention. Persistent offences, which included wearing skirts shorter than the approved length, non-black or navy hair accessories, coloured nail polish, shaved heads, and coloured socks would receive a formal note on the child's school record. The trend contributes to literature presented in 2.5.

#### 5.5.6: Times sanctions are issued (September 2008-July 2011)

Another factor which appears to be significant in consideration of conditions which are less likely / more likely to contribute towards disturbances to learning, was the timing of the lesson. Of 3122 incidents recorded which state the time the sanction was issued, there was a clear trend of disruptive incidents building as the day progressed with Period 5 (2:15-3:15 p.m.) nearly two-thirds more likely to witness disruptive behaviour than Period 1 (8:55-9:55 a.m.).

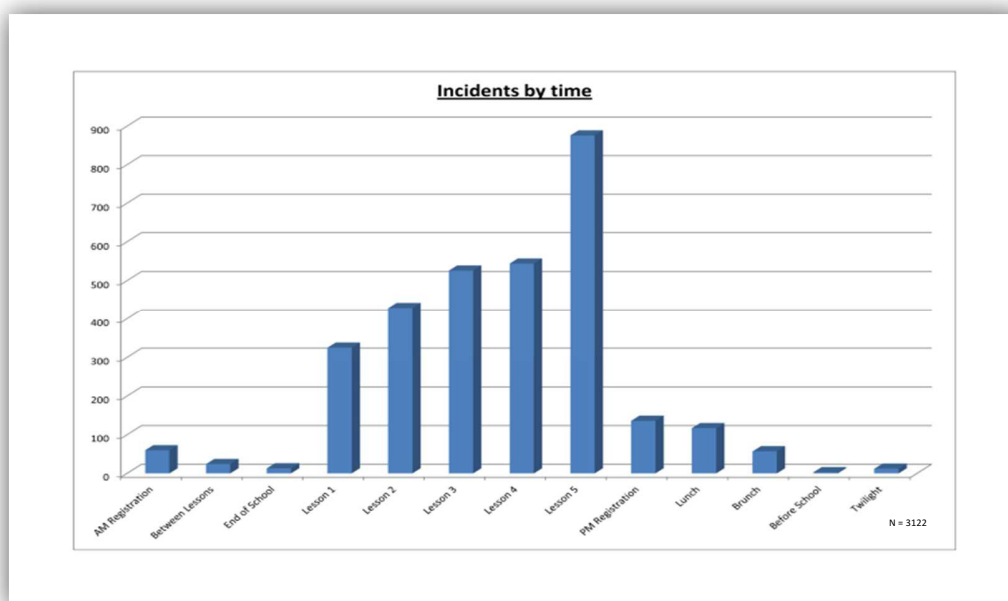


Diagram 5.7

An impromptu opportunity towards the end of the reconnaissance period (2011) enabled me to confirm the accuracy of school documents regarding the significance of the lesson time. 48 students from fragmented Year 7 (n: 33) and Year 9 (n: 15) classes (where whole school events

infringed on planned lessons) took part. Combined responses in the questionnaire affirmed the indicated trend.

In your experience, which period of the day are you most likely to 'mess about' in? (%)					
Period:	1	2	3	4	5
Y7 n:33	8	8	20	16	48
Y9 n:15	7	13	20	27	33

Table 5.8

Note the periods are not dependent on specific subjects, lessons or teachers.

My own perplexity in light of experience is documented in my diary blog:

Thursday, 22 October 2009

"I take Y9 History group Tuesday p1 and again on Thursday p5 - what a difference! Tuesday it takes all my energy to get them going whilst Thursday they arrive 'buzzing' with social baggage and very much offended, even insulted by the prospect of having to divert to the learning agenda".

The statistics indicated an accumulative arousal within the forming groups as they progressed through the day. Studies of the arousal/aggression hypothesis are usually applied to conflicts in groups (Berkowitz 1974) and are attributed to frustrations in response to environmental constraints (Dollard et al. 1939). However, I did not consider the external factors in the

afternoon to be significantly different from circumstances earlier in the day. Alternative explanations, beyond the scope of this current study, may be found in exploration of the effects of sleep deprivation (Durmer & Dinges 2005) due to children's extensive use of electronic gadgets (Hastings et al. 2009) for conduct which is generally more pliable in the mornings. Conversely, more excitable behaviour seen in later lessons might be attributed to additives and sugar intake in food and drink (Feingold Association 2007; Steer 2005) ingested during break and lunchtimes. An interesting comparison can be made of the performance of pupils in the IIU (see 4.2.4). Derived of their usual food and drink intake, and the company of a peer group, I observed their performance was constant throughout the day.

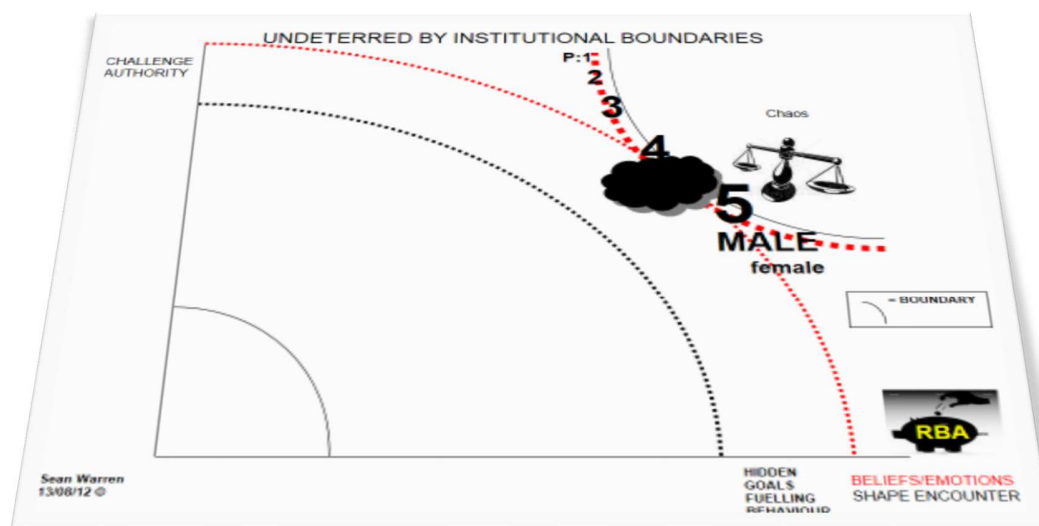


Diagram 5.8

The significance of the timings of lessons contributed further to the analysis of likely obstructs which might impede or undermine my progress. The hidden goals in the RC category are identified as power or revenge (Dreikurs 2004). These are applied to analysis of specific individual pupils in the action research. As an alternative to sanctions, this chapter is interested to investigate to what extent select staff may act as proxy for school boundaries. This categorisation built on suggestions from past pupils - that traits they recognised in some



teachers ensured their acceptance as authority figures, deeming them to be more worthy than others (see 4.2.5). Whilst Chapter Four and the following section identify this quasi-deference as compliance, the action research focuses instead on cooperation. An initial illustration of the distinction is presented below.

## **5.6: Recognized boundaries**

Irrespective of the time of the day, I wanted to explore further pupils' inclination *not* to join in with, or instigate disruption. I inquired of the conditions which would most likely deter pupils from disrupting learning and encourage them instead to be self-controlled as the lesson commenced. Using the language of metaphor, which is developed further in Chapter Six, the Beach, denoted by expressions of cooperation, compliance and conformity, represented order. Extending the metaphor, the experience of learning was symbolised by water. The level of subsequent pupil engagement can vary from staying in the shallow by 'paddling near the shore' (being dependent on the teacher), to venturing out and swimming in the deep and 'riding the waves' (interdependence with peers). In this scenario, students can consider whether to contribute, or whether to withhold, or in the language of the meteorological metaphor, whether to display Blue Sky or White Cloud behaviour to the learning climate. The blending of metaphors illustrates my argument that there is a reciprocal link between the pupil's experience of pedagogy and the behaviour observed. In addition, for many pupils their decision to take the path to the beach – rather than choose to go to the Rocks of Disorder which cultivates Dark Clouds (i.e. GC+RC see 5.5.4) – was determined by the presence of the individual teachers and the conduct of peers. Using this shared language I posed the following scenario:

*Q: You arrive at a classroom for the first time and survey the scene. What signs / cues would inform you that the beach of order is a wise option for you to take with this teacher? (N: 225)*  
*(Have some teachers and your experience of them in mind. Describe your observations, interpretations and experience without naming them. Think about what they do / how they are / the environment / the climate or mood.)*

The question draws out qualifying accounts to offer explanation for the two largest segments on the pie chart in Diagram 5.4 – reasons why disruption is not seen, and influences which deter students from joining in. Although I did not specify, two significant comments interpreted the question as an invitation to describe teachers who elicit Blue Sky cooperative responses which act to deter temptations to disrupt:

8Fri3F2:

[The teachers are] quiet, calm, in control. They trust you.

10Fri5F2:

The teachers I really like are the ones you can have a laugh with but they have such a big amount of respect from the students that the students listen and always do what they say. It is such a good balance as you feel like trusting them and you feel quite matey with them, but I get great marks because they are fab teachers and you want to impress them. When you feel as if you're on the same wave length as them, the lessons are really productive and you want to learn more.

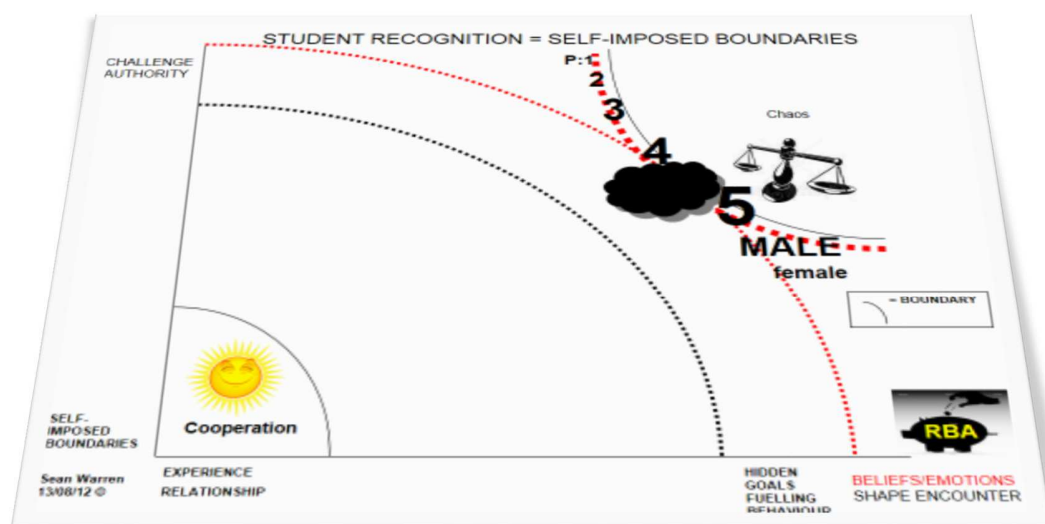


Diagram 5.9

This optimum state, suggesting order deriving from a cooperative rapport, is further contrasted, in Chapter Six, with the negative connotations encapsulated by mere compliance (Temple 2004). Here, the broad sector depicting order represents the polar opposite to the conditions associated with the term 'chaos'. I aim to demonstrate order, derived from respectful relationships, was not only foundational to the formation of groups I taught throughout AR, but will also show these were sustained through the substantial 'deposits' I was able to make to the RBA (see 5.5.4 & 6.4.1).

By contrast to the cited comments, the remainder of the pupils interpreted the question to convey their relationships with 'stricter' teachers as notions of deference seemed to become mixed with elements of fear. Coverage will draw on Foucault's portrayal of discipline as a mechanism of power which regulates the behaviour of individuals in the social body. This is done by regulating or normalising the organisation of space, of time (timetables) and the institution's representative curtailing children's activity and behaviour through the use of symbols, drills, posture, and movement (O'Farrell 2007). Foucault emphasized that power is not discipline, rather discipline is simply one way in which power can be exercised. Such practices aim to produce 'docile bodies' and 'obedient souls' (Foucault 1979). My work depicts this passive expression as White Cloud and is illustrated in Diagram 5.10 below.

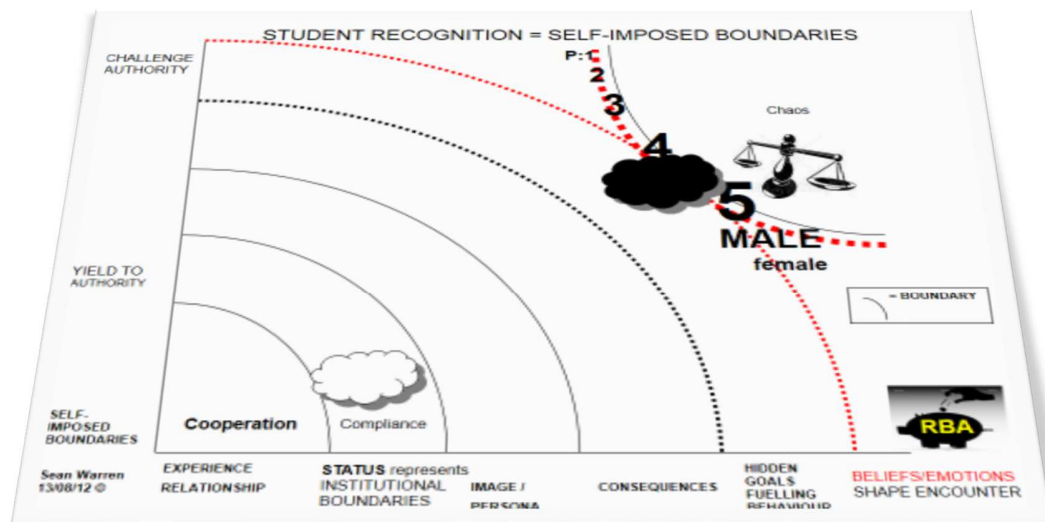


Diagram 5.10

Selecting both verbal and non-verbal cues, I attempt to accurately capture the essence of the 220 contributions I received. My presentation is mindful not to mislead readers or to misrepresent the original meaning of comments used. My account is consistent in its conveyance of the general theme provided by my pupils. This form of presentation is constructed as a variant of Youdell's (2011) conviction that a storytelling approach has a place in social science. Drawing on Degardo (1989; 1995) and Gillborn (2008), a range of experiences extracted from numerous resources are represented by a single narrative. Those responding were able to draw on personal experience. This suggests familiarity with the scenario I described. Only 5 pupils chose not to respond. As such I feel justified in presenting my students' collective answer. References which inform the models I construct here are presented in Appendix 5A, where the codes preceding pupils' comments indicate contributors' year group, class and gender (M/F).

Eagly's (1978) review of conformity studies showed females were more likely to conform than males, if the participants incurred face-to-face pressure. In this collection I do not differentiate

according to gender, but select comments which fit the theme. In Appendix 5A each key term is identified in bold whilst the number of times it was referred to is shown in brackets.

#### **5.6.1: The 'Means Business' Teacher:**

*You can tell if a teacher 'means business' or if they are 'a pushover'. Everyone is quiet and in their seats when I walk into the classroom. The teacher looks at you as you come in. Things seem organised, everyone is sat in their normal seats in accordance to the seating plan and they settle everyone down quickly with a kind of 'teacher radar' as they get order. They greet the class and seem aware of what everyone is doing as they address the whole class. Everyone has got everything ready and everyone is listening to them. Rules have been stated from the beginning, and everything is picked up on. We had heard the rumours, and other students told us of their reputation for strictness even before we attended a single lesson. There is work on the board and other people are working which suggests that they have already been told to be quiet. It is creepily silent. You can tell what is going on by the other students in the room; they give a lot away. All the people that usually mess around are quiet and even the trouble makers, the ones who are usually bad are good and getting on with their work. The teacher looks confident in what they are doing; they have control, the tables are in rows and it feels like there is less chance of getting away with anything. The teacher knows how to keep calm, so the class is calm and everyone is interacting with the tasks. This teacher has a strong mind; a strong personality and is persistent.*

It is noted that the organisation of space through arrangement of furniture can play a part in creating classroom ecology (Sommer 1967). Sociopetal table groupings can promote interaction, whilst sociofugal layouts, such as rows, discourage collaboration.

The term 'everyone' and 'all' are considered key in light of established social-psychological studies. The descriptors act to affirm Sherif (1936; 1966) conclusions that group norms can act

as a frame of reference for individual members who internalise and adapt accordingly. Asch (1952; 1955; 1957) showed that larger the unanimous majority, greater the conformity. Moscovici (1985) found perception of majority consensus had direct influence likely to induce compliance. This is contrasted with the latent, indirect influence of a minority – in this case the authority figure, which induces a longer lasting effect, termed ‘conversion’. Whilst accepting an external authority or class leader can establish a standard, Sherif (1976) noted most group norms developed through reciprocal influence. Usher & Edwards (1994: p.92) pointed out that “when discipline is effective, power operates through persons rather than upon them”. The narrative might at first glance appear to be describing an oppressive climate; alternatively it may represent a solid foundation from which strong boundaries are established and respectful relationships are allowed to develop. As depicted by the following comments, “it is when disciplinary regulation breaks down that coercion comes to the fore” (ibid. p.92).

#### **5.6.2: The ‘Scary’ Teacher**

*There’s the physical appearance, but the body language of the teacher gives a lot away too. Sometimes they are already annoyed e.g. scowling, tapping foot, arms crossed. It’s not just the way they look at you; they give you ‘the’ look; the look of authority. They just look at you and stare; a stern stare. This teacher can be harsh, even evil; someone or something has made them angry. That teacher look – scary, especially when they shout. Some male teachers look so big, so intimidating. The look on their face and the way they sit and talk, it makes you feel small and scared; they don’t smile or say hello. They say don’t mess about or I will come down on you like a ton of bricks. The pupils know not to mess about; you know s/he has a short fuse; they say ‘silence’ and they don’t let you speak or anything, not even fidget. They might be in a mood. Using his voice, it is a loud, demanding, bad voice which shows you up in the class in front of your mates. The teacher is stubborn, strong willed and strict never afraid to over use the ‘C’ system in order to punish.*

Interestingly, detentions are only mentioned twice as the force of the individual teacher's presence or persona appears to be synonymous with the concept of boundaries.

Data presented towards the end of Appendix 5A show a degree of complexity beginning to emerge as some pupils looked beyond polarized stances. Distinctions between 'strict' and 'nice' were appreciated and there was also some recognition that an individual teacher might embody both traits. My action research aims to demonstrate how striking a balance between these attributes has the capacity to deter students from disrupting lessons. Other pupils were more pragmatic citing the influence of routines, the lure of the subject or the notion of 'important' teachers. The latter factor resounds with my own childhood experiences (see 6.7.4) as well as substantiating insights offered by ex-'Rain Cloud pupils' examining the factors which determined their compliance in detentions (see 4.2.5).

### **5.6.3: Commentary**

The collective tone within the answers suggests the conditions described evoked the conformity inherent within the White Cloud percentage (32.31). This concurred with my personal knowledge which suggested coercive tactics exemplifying power, often led to submissive responses in which compliance was generated. This is contrasted with an identification based on relationship and subsequent internalization, as pupils adopt behaviours which are congruent with their value systems (Kelman 1958). The section's content is reminiscent of how I might have been described by different pupils prior to this study. Interestingly, of the 220 responses only two pupils mentioned a teacher's formal status (e.g. Head of Department; Head of House, Head-teacher). Status, it seems, is not confined to organisational position or rank, but is largely dependent on individual and collective observations and interpretation. Later, I will place this issue under further scrutiny in 5.8.3.

Whilst I have used the terms 'comply' and 'conform' to convey inhibiting instances of order, I am interested to consider the tendency of pupils to follow the directives of people who they

had identified as being representative of authority. Milgram (1974) showed the inclination of subjects to submit to commands went even further. He described an agentic state in which participants own personal goals became subordinate to the *obedience* of another. The models I present suggest an individual teacher's facade or character is an effective deterrent for those inclined to test authority. Whilst authoritarians might argue the 'educational' ends the approach enables justify the disciplinary means, I hold two objections. Aside from the psychological effect on the individual teacher, my concern extends to consider the suppression of those children predisposed to follow and accept the example of prominent adults entrusted with their education. In Chapter Six I will argue that the child's subtle internalisation of adult role-models can have a profound and lasting effect on emergent behaviour. I proceed to show an authoritative approach can provide appropriate boundaries, enabling the pupil's autonomous voice to negotiate relationships and decipher the subtleties of power and trust. I consider such goals as definitive of educational achievement, and need not be sacrificed in the sole pursuit of educational attainment.

Illustrative in deciphering the distinction between cooperation and compliance, I highlight the dichotomy between the two comments shown at the beginning of this section and the plethora of subsequent responses. Upon reflection I am drawn to make a theoretical distinction. The former appear to derive from the two pupils' 'personal identity' (Hitlin 2003). The notion invites discussion of value commitments and is associated with the moral identity (Stets & Carter 2011). I argue that acquiring trust encourages the pupil to express authenticity through responsibility and self-consistency. This is extended in Chapter Six.

By contrast, in this chapter I make the distinction with students' role identity or social identity to convey a distancing between people occupying different positions within school (Burke & Stets 2009). Despite Burke (2004) defining roles, such as pupils and teachers, as broad categories that people within a culture learn to apply to themselves and to others, my data suggested this is informed and adjusted by observation, perception and experience. Often pupils' verification of authority is attained by what the teacher does, not merely by who s/he is



(Stets & Burke 2000). Although teachers are employed by the school and naturally assume an elevated place within the hierarchy, my research confirms pupils' acceptance of their authority is highly variable. My data shows in reality individual pupils are versed in modifying relative roles in accordance to context. In Chapter Six I apply Berne's (1964) terminology 'victim' and 'persecutor', to exemplify the fluidity in which classroom participants can adapt to different situations.

Whilst the responses in 5.6 allude to notions of order and control, Elton (1989: p.65) offered a pragmatic perspective for those addressing behaviour in schools:

“Reducing bad behaviour is a realistic aim. Eliminating it completely is not. Historical and international comparisons help to illustrate this obvious but important point. Children have a need to discover where the boundaries of acceptable behaviour lie. It is natural for them to test these boundaries to confirm their location and, in some cases, for the excitement of a challenge. The proper answer to such testing is to confirm the existence of the boundaries, and to do so firmly, unequivocally and at once”.

My pupils seemed acutely aware that some staff appeared to be less able to do so effectively.

### **5.7: Indistinct boundaries**

Stets & Tsushima's (2001) research into negative emotions derived from role-based identities, recognised suppressed anger as prevalent. Whilst they reported identities characterised as low status to be more intense and having longer lasting anger, my data suggests pupils' timetables do however, afford them periodic opportunities to contest power with selected authority figures. Foucault (1980: p.95) argued, such resistance was intrinsic to power—“where there is power there is resistance”.

My work has suggested that whilst this is more common within a minority of pupils, the vast majority are capable of participating to various degrees, should the circumstances present itself. This section shows students' perception and degree of acceptance of an individual teacher's authority, informed by observation and experience, as integral to such situations. As long ago as 1957, Strodbeck et al. recognised those adults perceived by pupils as low status authority figures are less likely to induce conformity to school rules. The following section invites consideration of a classroom climate in which boundaries are less transparent. In relation to pupils' identities, I am interested to explore the 'disturbances' (Burke 2004) to individuals' 'identity standard' (Stets & Carter 2011). This phrase was defined as meanings which constitute 'self' (Burke 2004). Deaux (1996) pointed out personal traits are rarely understood apart from social definition. Meanings are the responses to perceptions. Perceptions are associated with roles, positions and groups that exist within a social structure. These are often shared within local settings of a social structure.

Lessons in which pupils' self-control is less apparent, due primarily to a lack of cooperation or absence of coercion, an interesting shift in dynamics is reported. The individual pupil's identity is liable to relate to the ambiance emanating from the group, and the teacher may be perceived as a collective target. It is perhaps this phenomenon which is commonly conveyed when practitioners depict disruptive behaviour in schools. It is this complex experience which provokes simplistic, draconian behaviour management approaches prevalent in 2.2. My interest is in the apparent void in the teacher's personal and professional qualities, which are discerned by individual pupils and affirmed by a proportion of the class. This portrayal represents a different, though equally damaging obstacle to the relational pedagogy I am advocating.

The ensuing emphasis detailing my pupils' collective perception is conceptualised through self-categorization theory (Turner 1985; Turner et al. 1987; Turner 1991), representing a theoretical development within Social Identity Theory. Categorization sharpens inter-group boundaries to illuminate awareness of in-group and out-group through a cognitive process which brings focus on subjective meanings derived from experience. Hogg et al. (1995) argues that categorization

essentially 'depersonalises' people, such as those labelled as cover or supply teachers, but is devoid of negative overtones of 'dehumanization'. Rather than representing a loss of identity, the emphasis is on contextual change in the level of identity, from individual to group member. I am particularly interested to consider the apparent subordination of individuals' personal values during this process. The focus builds on Juvonen & Cadigan's (2002) findings (see 2.6) and exemplifies the 'them' and 'us' dichotomy which depicted the ineffectual authority figure as representative of 'out-group'.

My recognition, both as a child and adult in education, is that the extreme positions (denoted as order and chaos) are largely determined by the direct relationship between pupil and teacher. As shown in Diagram 5.10 (above), I am particularly interested to contemplate the notion of dynamic boundaries which occupy the complex space between the polarised categories. I anticipate pupils' unmotivated passivity and tendency to participate in low level disruptions, is located in the middle 'zone'; here, the dynamics of interaction between peers often compete with interest in the subject matter and the authority of the adult. This I argue, can present a dynamic tension between pupils' social agenda, and learning engagement. This potentially chaotic dynamism can perplex a 'struggling' teacher. If left unaddressed, their cumulative effect disturbs the classroom climate which can leave the teacher feeling frustrated and dis-empowered (as qualified below, & in Chapters Six & Seven).

When pupils exhibited the type of behaviour recorded in detention data, it suggested that either the threat of sanctions did not deter or there was a feeling, or calculation, that the sanction would not be administered. It is assumed that not all disruptive behaviour resulted in a detention. The school 'system' during research allowed two warnings for less 'serious' behaviour. These were articulated as 'C1'/'S1' (recorded in 235 incidents) and 'C2'/'S2' (recorded in 691 references). I was curious to consider whether students used these warnings as a buffer, or a gauge to measure, test or resist boundaries.

The next question further probed the idea that some teachers were not perceived by pupils to be as 'important' as other staff. 5.6 showed that encounters which are principally defined by power in accordance with hierarchal roles, yet devoid of established positive relationships can deter misbehaviour. I asked:

*Q: What experiences or 'signs' have helped inform you that it is 'safe' to resist a teacher's requests & instructions so you choose to 'mess about' instead?*

As with the previous question I collated pupils' responses whilst seeking to be consistent with the essence of replies.

**Questionnaires - (N: 225 – 16 non replies):**

The first term which caught my attention was 'control' - mentioned 43 times. This core concept requires closer scrutiny. It is interesting to note that teachers made only 6 references to control in their descriptive accounts in detention data. None reinforced the theme being advanced from the students that they, the teacher, had little or no control. This might suggest that those teachers who habitually gave detentions had 'control'. The administering of sanctions might be perceived as evidence of that. However, the previous analysis of responses to a '*strong business-like*' teacher (5.6) indicated that the teachers' presence and mannerisms ensured they did not have to resort to constantly giving sanctions, although the '*scary teacher*' was inclined to administer them arbitrarily. The terminology recorded in detention data suggested the volume of detentions was often preceded by frequent low level disruptions and a legion of contestations which culminated in a formal reprimand.

I also noted the concept of 'power', which is integral to the discussion of data I am presenting, is a word conspicuous in its absence. There are no references to 'power' in the 4061 detention statements. The question currently being reviewed offers just 2 explicit mentions (emphasis added):

9TH3M7:

“Nervous, ignored, no *power*, blind eye, give up”;

10Fri5M10:

“Most people believe that sub-teachers or supply are an excuse to mess about and also if everybody else is shouting and talking. If the teacher is on their own then people believe they can over-*power* them”.

The theme running through the content affirms contestation habitually occurs between the pupil (who is part of a collective) and the adult (whose status and authority is being challenged and undermined). Before analysing the collective response I administered a questionnaire to Y7 and Y9 pupils to affirm my assumption that the vast majority of incidents happened in front of an audience of peers. I asked:

*Q: Would you ‘mess about’ if it was just you and your teacher in the classroom?*

No \_\_\_\_\_ Depends \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

	No	Depends	Yes
Y7 n: 36	26	10	0
Y9 n: 15	8	7	0
Total N: 51	34	17	0

Table 5.9

Those who said ‘depends’ tended to refer to who the teacher was and whether they knew or liked them. The reality that much contestation was played out before an audience, supports my

observations with pupils attending the Internal Isolation Unit in my school. There, the apparent gains made through individual intervention strategies tended to become compromised when they were reintegrated back into the classroom (see 4.2.4). The significance of peers and the individual teacher is thus integral to my ensuing exploration of contextual factors affecting a pupil's behaviour.

Engaging with the original statements, collated and referenced in Appendix 5B, I again use narrative to convey the collective responses of my pupils to construct a third teacher model – *the ineffective teacher*. In response Diagram 5.11 (below) indicates how pupils might progressively push and test boundaries as they gauge the climate. Consistent with the theoretical lens in this section I deliberately intertwine singular and plural pronouns to emphasise both the individual voice and their apparent adherence to the influence of the group. The suggestion of negligent expectations and standards immediately came to the fore in response to the '*signs that it was safe*' question:

#### **5.7.1: The 'Ineffective' Teacher:**

*The first signals are they're not ready when you enter the room so you know it'll be hard for them to get order later. Pupils are already messing about, as the teacher 'fumbles about', unorganised, and seems without confidence; that is like a licence to misbehave, especially if the normal teacher isn't there you think yes, sub!, because they don't follow things up. They just give you instructions and then read or go on the computer, so it feels like it's not really like a proper lesson. If the teacher hasn't been clear in telling us to do something, everyone does their own thing. They're clueless about what is actually happening; we students have a, err... 'teacher radar' – it judges what the teacher is like, it's automatic, we can't prevent it. It's just like with some you know you can get away with it and [with] others you can't.*

*These signs confirm what people have already told us. We soon learn what a teacher is like. As we get used to them we can see they are weak as they don't give you consequences. They rarely shell out Cs, especially inexperienced teachers who are not fully aware of the sanction system. They continue to give warnings but don't give out any actual punishment; they take no action. They don't have a back bone, don't put others in their place and fail to make an example of them. They let you off very easily. They don't stick to uniform rules; instead continuously telling us how few detentions they've given out - it generally means they don't want to. They simply repeat a C1 so the students get loads of warnings but these are just empty threats.*

*The teacher just stands there doing nothing with their arms folded waiting for students to be quiet – they rarely are!!! Even after the teacher has addressed the class, nobody pays attention, people carrying on talking. If they don't know what they're doing people walk all over them. You can tell by their facial expressions, their body language and tone of voice that they are nervous. The teacher is just a pushover; people are screaming and the teacher is just talking louder to try and talk over them; and even if they shout at you, they have a high voice, it's just funny.*

*The teacher then gets off-task and concentrates on controlling one unruly student, but everyone's messing around. You can sit with your friends if they don't know the seating plan so everyone is sat in a different place; people are stood up and we can get away with it. If others that normally don't mess around do with this teacher; and everyone else is doing it I join in to fit in; I will follow my friends because you want to be cool and don't want to look like a 'wuss'. If my mate gets bored, he starts being naughty so I copy him. When everyone's messing around and when you know what the teacher is like so you know how far you can go without getting told off. If you see one person getting away with it then you can too and soon everyone is. Because we're in a big group and it overawes the teacher, with everyone doing it, you wouldn't get caught. The teacher*

*can't keep control and they don't do anything to stop the chaos, they just lets you do what you want.*

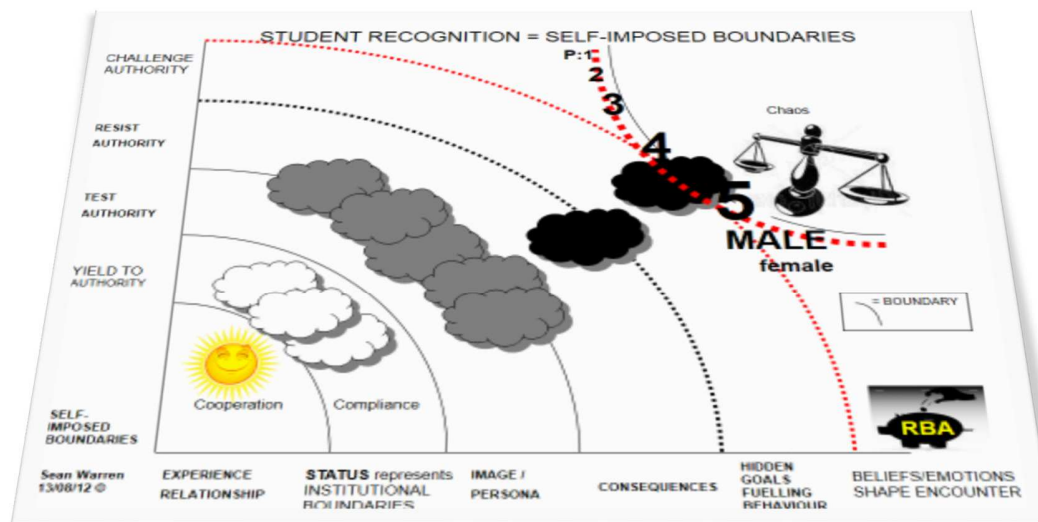


Diagram 5.11

It is suggested that the modes of behaviour, categorized by weather in this chapter, might typically manifest in response to whether the pupil recognises the teacher as being a creditable representative of institutional boundaries.

For some pupils adverse learning conditions might evoke active disruptive behaviour such as attention seeking (GC), whilst on other occasions a covert obstructive response might be passive (WC). Diagram 5.11 (above) indicates, for example, an unknown cover teacher who is not attentive or assertive upon meeting the class, s/he may experience continual low level disruption as many pupils gauge the climate and by-pass the initial restrictive boundaries to converge on the fourth line from the right, awaiting cues to stop or carry on. Data suggests some students will take the lead in this examination, risking sanctions whilst winning the approval of peers. The often ambiguous testing and resisting of authority takes place in this 'zone of complexity'. By definition the boundaries are equivocal and open to interpretation.



These expressions of low level disruption will usually precede challenging behaviour, which by contrast indicate clearer boundaries to all through the sanction system. The pupils' psychological 'games', to draw the teacher in to contestation in this zone, are worth exploring in my action research.

Examining the narrative through the lens of self-categorisation, it is clear many of the pupils subscribed to a common social identity depicting them as the 'in-group'. By definition the authority figure, representative of a structured organisation which attributes contrasting categories of power, status and prestige (Hogg & Abrams 1988) is depicted as the 'out-group'. Pupils' reference to the 'everyone' affirms a sense of solidarity. In accordance with Verkuyten (2002) (see 2.6), there is clear evidence of pupils claiming their actions to be partially legitimate due to the qualities or performance of the adult. Data insinuates blame for the group's emergent behaviour lies with the teacher, and specifically their failure to adhere to the pupils' established expectations of authority and control. That these are consistent with authoritarian descriptions of discipline, suggests students have absorbed a degree of conditioning throughout their experience of schooling, concerning apposite institutional roles and associated power.

In accordance with literature denoting pupil behaviour as anti-structure (see 2.6), individual pupils will have to position themselves amongst peers within the disruptive classroom. Forsyth's (1983: p.149) analysis of different conformity models, concluded that "social impact depends on the size of one's own sub-group in relation to the size of the group as a whole". Burke (2004) pointed out, verifying the self as a group member involves being like the others and receiving recognition, approval, and acceptance from those others. For Stets & Carter (2011), identity standards can be viewed as goals that are obtained by manipulating meanings so that alignment with peer social agenda can act to diminish the importance of the prescribed learning agenda. This may instigate the incongruity individuals experience between the values inherent within their personal identity, and the apparent 'in-group' norms. I was interested to delve deeper into contextual factors which might influence the likelihood of diverter tactics to affirm perceived 'in-group' status.

### 5.7.2: Contextual influences Y7

It was clear the individual teacher was integral in determining the extent to which order, complexity or 'chaos' contribute to the group norm. In the unpredictable 'zone of complexity', it is assumed the child's affinity and interaction with the specific curriculum area (i.e. a favourite subject) is influential in framing their responses to peer pressure. I explored how these three aspects might be combined to formulate questions which may provide further insight to inform Diagram 5.11 (above). The influence of peers was broken up into three terms to make further distinctions: friends, peers you sit near, and whole class behaviour.

I asked 94 Year 7 students to contemplate the following question:

*Q: Think of a lesson where you do not behave or perform well (don't name it). How do the following factors influence you there?*

*Is it the behaviour of the whole class? Is it you don't like the subject? Is it too difficult / boring etc.? Maybe how you feel about the specific teacher is a major factor. Think through and plot how these five areas influence you in that class. These numbers represent reasons for your NEGATIVE experience. Remember they must add up to 100% and you CAN put 0% for any of the categories.*

Teacher	Subject	Whole Class behaviour	The behaviour of people sitting near you	The behaviour of my friends in the class
EXAMPLE: 15	45	5	10	25

*You can add some details about your choices if you wish.*

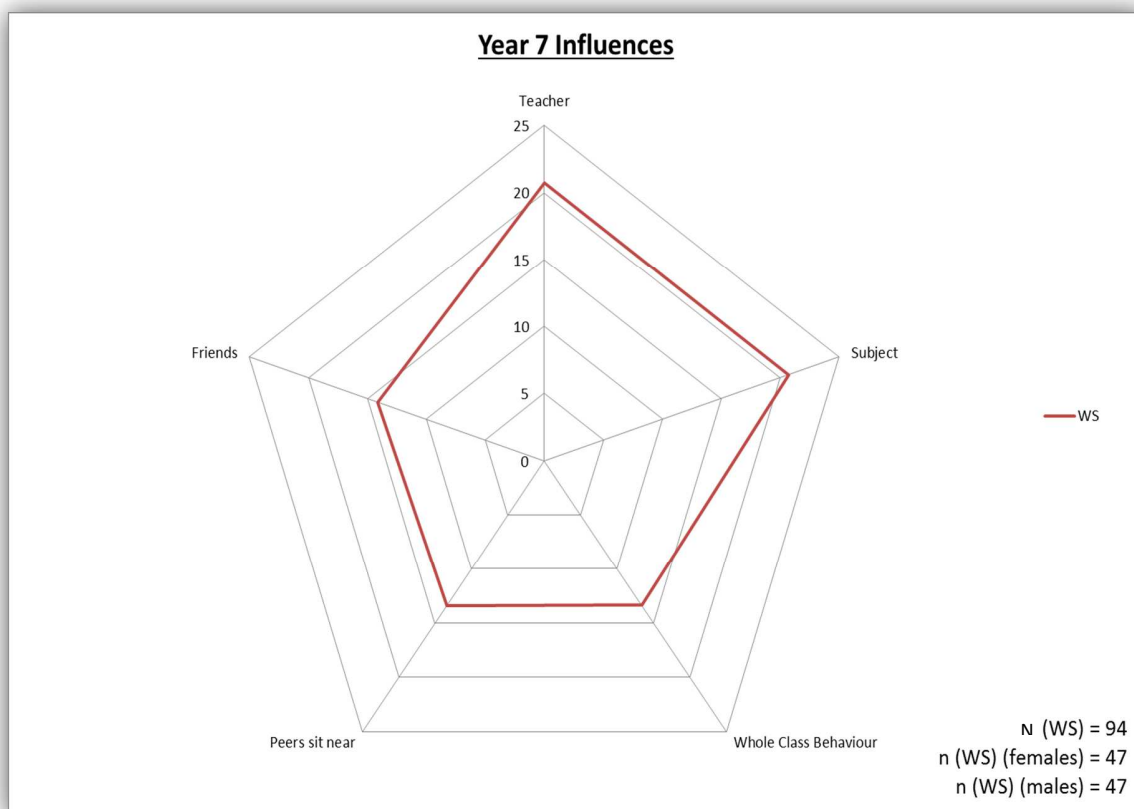


Diagram 5.12<sup>3</sup>

All five factors were confirmed as relevant. The most significant were identified as issues concerned with disengagement with the subject and negative influence of the individual teacher. Both of these attracted around 22% each. Variables associated with the teacher are placed under further scrutiny forthwith. Approaches to engage pupils in learning, whilst positively utilising peer relations, is considered in Chapter Six.

### 5.8: Broad teacher distinctions:

I wished to extend my understanding of how pupils' perceptions led to them distinguishing between different categories of teacher (Diagram 13 below). Before inquiring I sought to extract a definition, or idea, of a 'strong' teacher from Y7 and Y9 pupils. In accordance with 5.6,

<sup>3</sup> 'WS' indicates Y7 whole school experiences.

the consensus described someone who is strict (18 mentions), can control (12) the class, but can also have fun (11). A number of pupils also associated the capacity to induce ‘hard work’ as part of their perception. Diagram 14 precedes to show these attributes (or the lack of) are integral to pupils’ propensity to get distracted from the learning task. The answers from both cohorts are consistent with each other, although Y9’s differentiation between categories is stronger. Although a promising line of inquiry, it is noted the sample sizes are very small.

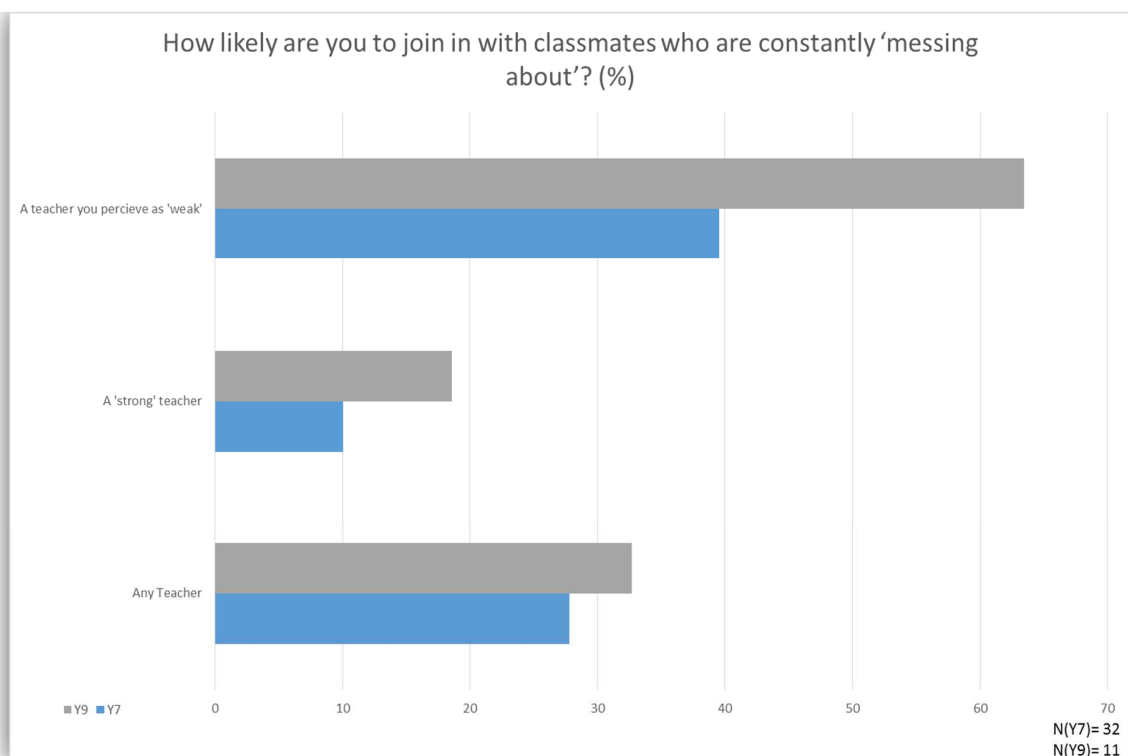


Diagram 5.13

### 5.8.1: The ‘strong’ teacher and variables

Having established the pupils’ conceptions of a ‘strong’ teacher (see sections 5.6 & 5.8), the next question expanded on the term ‘subject’. I inquired whether the pupils’ level of competence; or their experience / perception of learning might provoke degrees of disruption despite the ‘strong’ teacher’s presence. The combined response from Y7 and Y9 is given below:

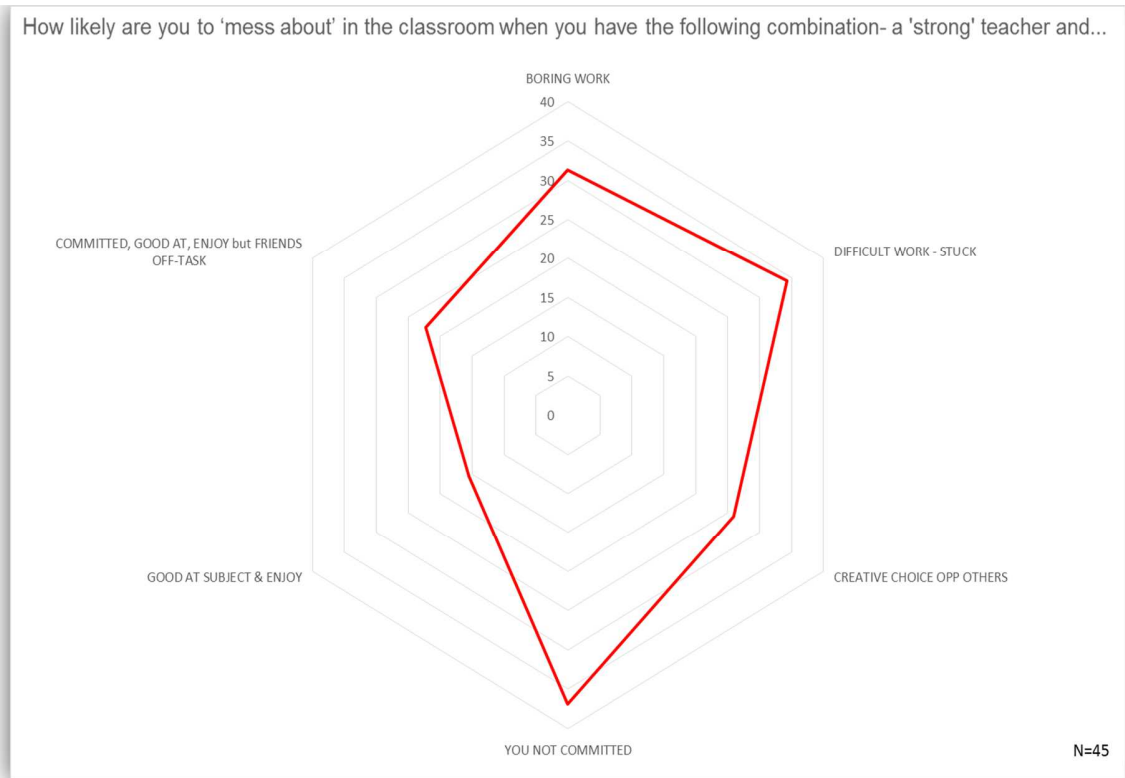


Diagram 5.14

The total is further broken down between Y7 and Y9 responses below:

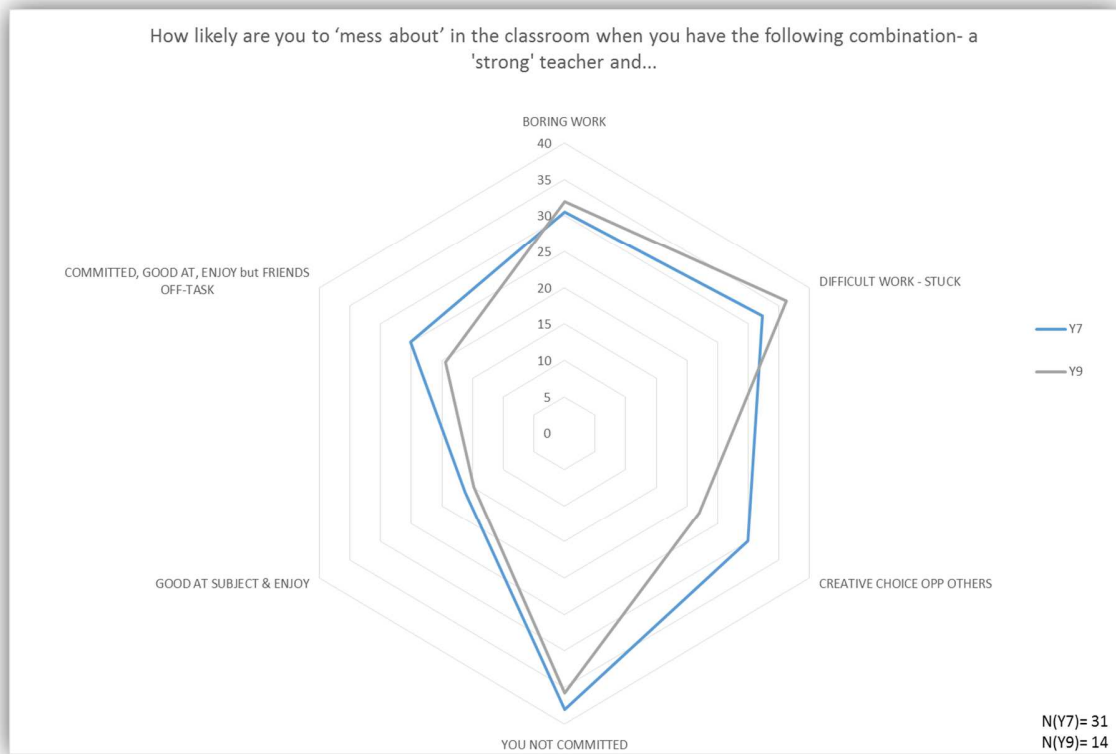


Diagram 5.15

Although Diagram 5.13 showed the presence of a 'strong' teacher significantly diminished the probability of disruption, Diagrams 5.14 and 5.15 reveal aspects which suggest the teacher would still need to negotiate around competing variables. I was interested in inquiring to what degree the variables might begin to negate the 'strong' teacher's influence as deterrent. The indicators which suggested increased disruption (when pupils got stuck whilst being more autonomous) caused me to ponder. I had to consider the possible implications for my burgeoning pedagogical approach which aimed to decrease pupil dependency and teacher directives. In addition, the variable at the bottom of the graph represented an on-going challenge for me. Throughout my career, I deliberately inquired of the views of incoming Y7 students in their first lesson with me. My subject, Religious Education (RE), has traditionally been viewed by the majority of my pupils as irrelevant to their lives, interests and ambitions and so does not evoke their commitment. My plans aimed to challenge pupils to intellectually

grapple with difficult concepts, and to employ habits of resilience (Claxton 2002) for when they inevitably encounter difficulty in their learning. I also sought to incorporate greater use of creative open tasks as a vehicle to both engage and equip learners (Chapter Six). Interestingly, each of these aspects were identified as factors which might induce disruption despite the presence of a 'strong' teacher.

### **5.8.2: Supply teachers**

To explore the significance of these variables further, I cited them alongside the 'weak' teacher. Earlier data showed usage of the term 'Supply' indicated pupils often perceived the adult fulfilling this role as devoid of status, let alone relationship. Supply or 'sub' is mentioned 68 times in response to the '*safe to disrupt*' question in 5.7 (+ 5 references for 'Cover' teacher). As such, I proceeded to equate the token Supply teacher as synonymous with pupils' perceptions of a 'weak' teacher. Pupils' references, outlined earlier, portrayed a scene in which the adult was prejudged by many students, signifying an opportunity for a significant minority of children to enact obstructive actions, which were recognised by peers as cues to join in. Statements suggested the groups were well versed in reading the signals emanating from the adult and classmates.

Interestingly, search terms applied to the detention data (N: 4061) shows:

- Supply is mentioned only 29 times = 0.01%
- Cover has just 41 references = 0.01%

It seems disruptive behaviour was rarely registered through official means. This suggests that either Supply teachers did not often have cause to administer C3/S3, or Supply staff were not using the sanction system in accordance with policy. It is noted that external Supply teachers became less common in the school due to Workforce Reform measures which sought to predominately use Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). This was introduced in 2009 to

fragment detention data which charts offences from September 2008 – July 2011. The low mention of Supply or Cover is disconcerting as over three quarters of recorded offences took place post HLTA being positioned as first option for internal cover. It is apparent that the pupils did not make this distinction between external and internal Supply in their references to 'Cover' teachers.

The diagram below plots the combined responses of Years 7 and 9:

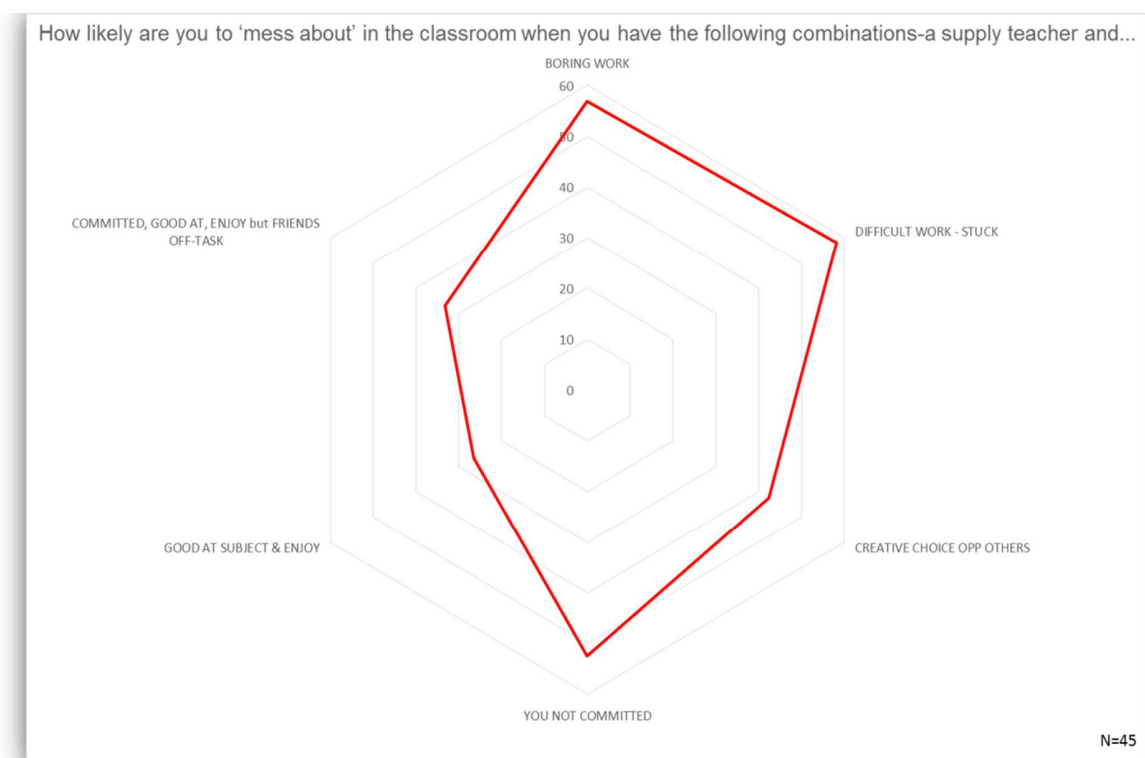


Diagram 5.16

Data is then broken down to show the difference between Y7 and Y9 responses:



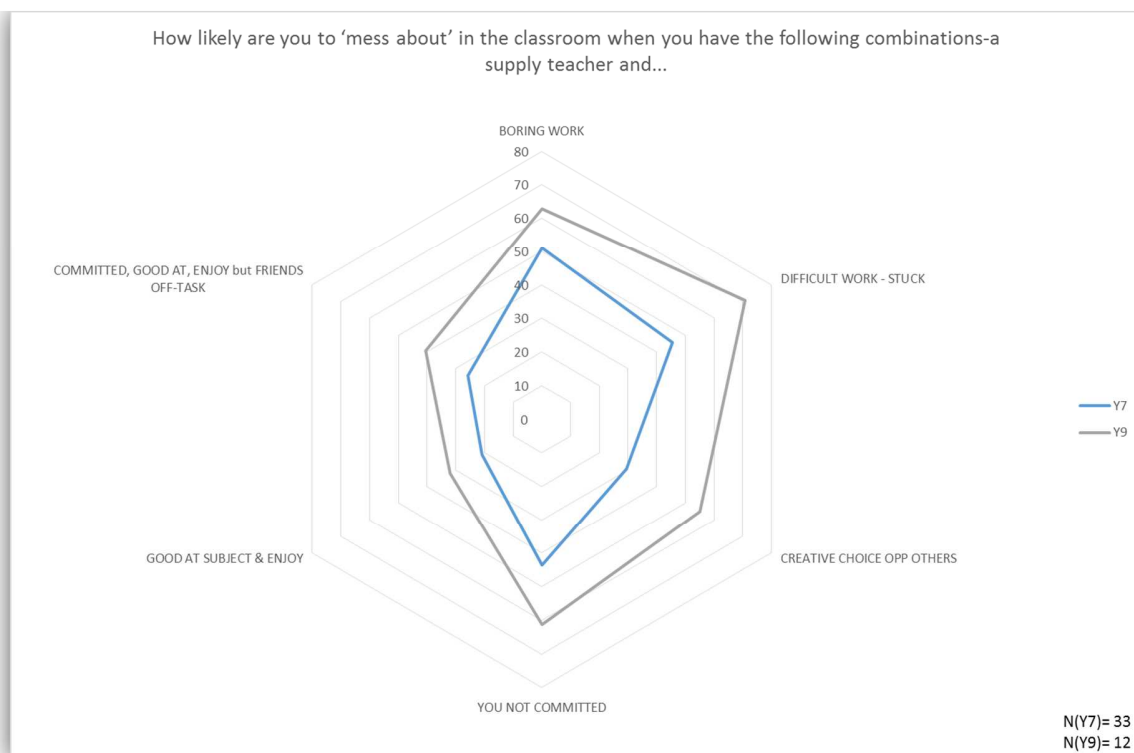


Diagram 5.17

Although predictably both cohorts indicated they were far more likely to become distracted with a supply teacher than with a 'strong' teacher (below), Diagram 5.17 (above) shows there is a marked difference in Y9 reactions to those of Y7 pupils. The two groups showed a correlation when considering the influence of a 'strong' teacher (Diagram 5.15), which dissipated when this variable is changed.

Follow-up discussion revealed despite pupils' awareness that a Supply teacher had the capacity to also be 'strong', it seemed entrenched associations with weakness dominated initial interpretations. Pre-conceptions about Supply teachers suggest each of the six potentially distracting factors was more likely to be used as a reason, or excuse, to disrupt. The diagram below affirms the significance of the position of teacher in determining whether these potentially obstructive variables equated to mild or more serious disruption.

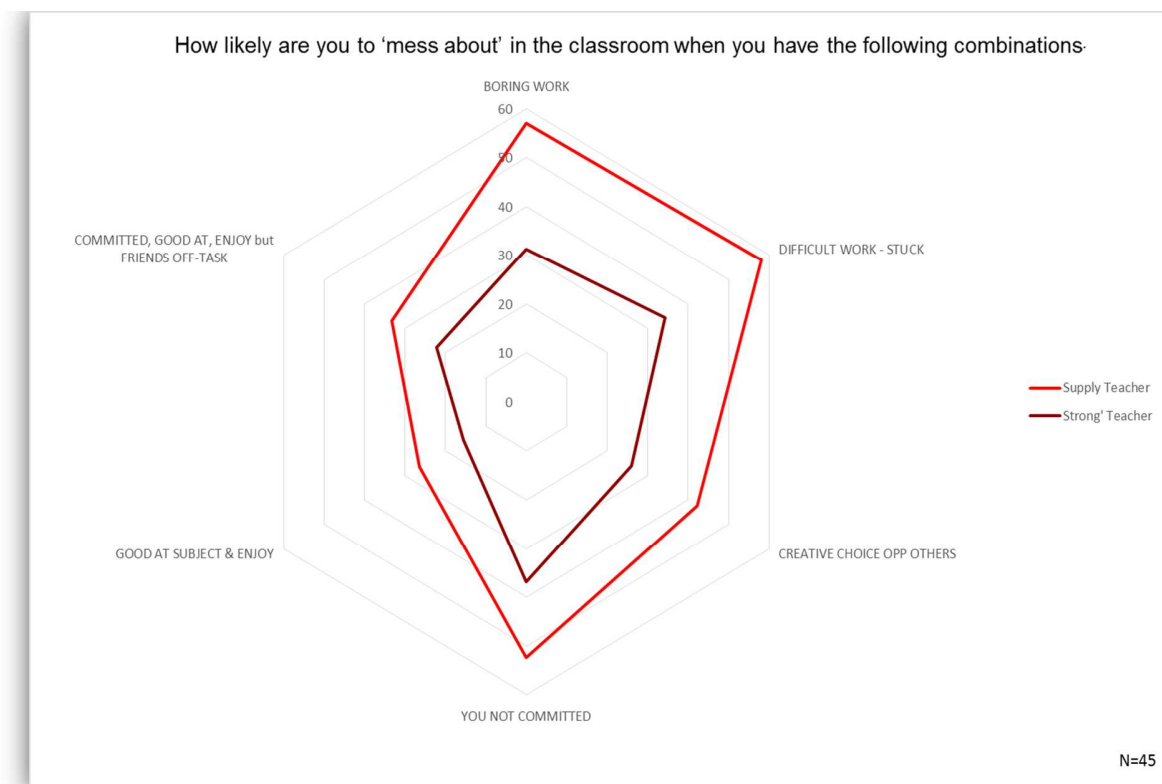


Diagram 5.18

### 5.8.3: Cover teacher / status

I wished to probe the gap between the lines apparent in Diagram 5.18. It illustrates, according to students, the variable influence of Supply and 'strong' teachers to either prompt or stem their propensity to unsettle a lesson. I sought to better understand contributory factors which might reduce the disparity. I took preconceptions about 'strong', 'weak', and 'new' and incorporated the attributes to the position of a Cover teacher to present two sets of questions. Firstly, to elicit responses to the 'strong' Cover teacher (Qs 1-6); then combining 'weak' and 'new' I sought to monitor pupils' behavioural adjustments (Qs 7-11). I was intent on disrupting uncritical generalisations emerging from data.

Due to the reoccurring strand which depicted an adult in the role of 'supply/sub/cover' teacher as a comparative non-entity (in comparison to a 'strong' teacher), I was interested to challenge the presumption that if the substitute teacher was an established 'strong' teacher, this would automatically induce a state of ordered compliance. The validity of this avenue of inquiry became apparent to me when I was required to cover a Y10 tutor group. I realised an understated factor, which is not explicitly mentioned in data but is a constant ingredient when analysing the contextual factors impinging on *any* Supply teacher, is the concept of territory. Subject to substantial research, commonly making associations with gangs and the animal kingdom (Forsyth 1983) I saw its relevance contributing to the complexity I was studying. The resistance I experienced to my authority was profound as pupils who would not dream of challenging directives in my own classroom, openly and deliberately seemed to ignore my requests and seemed to even resent my presence in their tutor base. As my diary notes record, my sense of equilibrium and established assumptions about status were further disturbed:

Tuesday

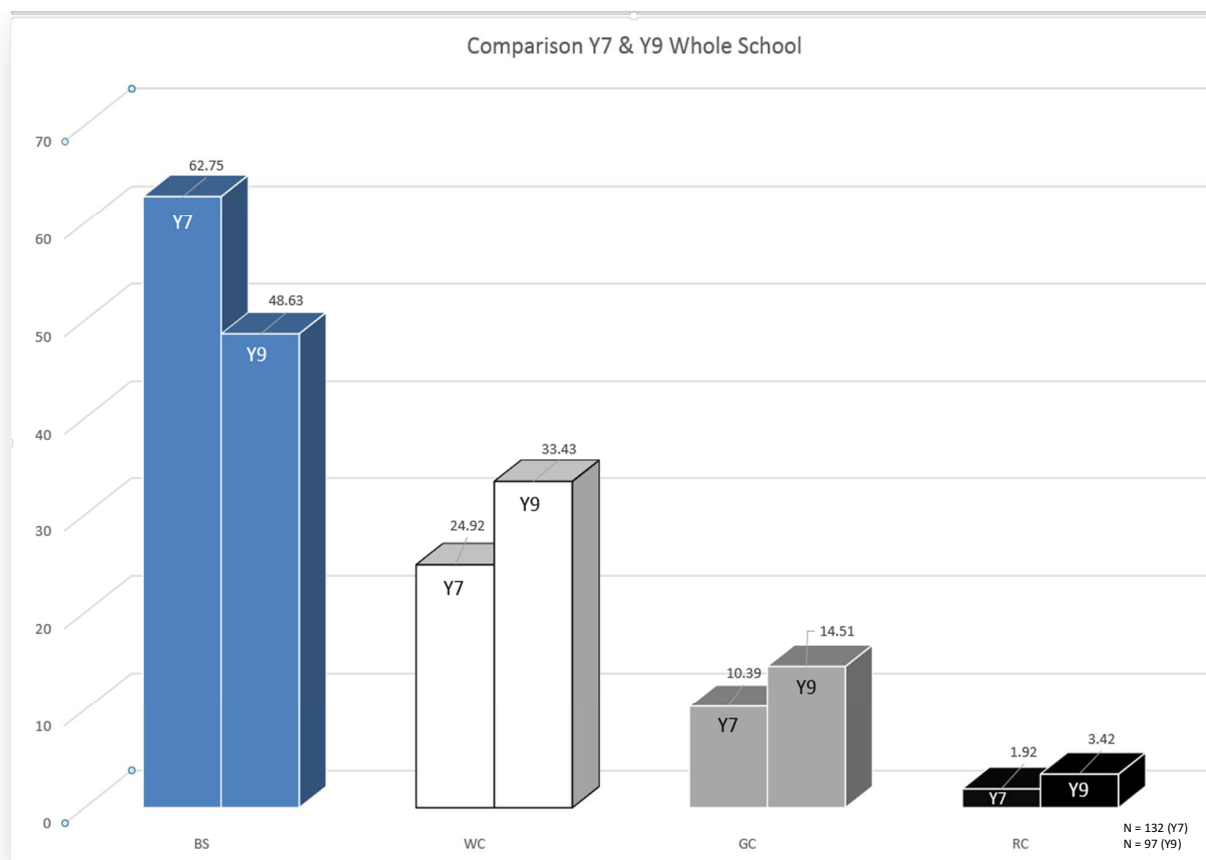
20/01/09:

"No work left. Social group usually do no work but are allowed to sit around and chat - I found out. I was going through the process of cajoling when the Head of House pops in and directs 'silent reading and sign diaries'. Easier said than done I thought! Even more interesting was the class seemed to recognise the HOH's presence the moment she entered the room. Pupils quickly sat up straight and looked attentive. I was perplexed that they would recognise my colleague's authority over my own".

I reflected that the brief exchange I witnessed was between pupils adorning the temporary roles of tutees, and a teacher they recognised as an appropriate authority due to her position as Head of their House. It was also significant that the class contained two influential girls I had previously encountered and had developed a strained relationship with. In accordance, the influence of social dynamics on peer conduct is considered in Chapter Six.

Experiencing a similar phenomenon in 2010, I was asked to cover a 'challenging' Y8 tutor group once a week for two terms. The eventual switch from their established base to my room instantly resulted in pupils reverting to the amenable conduct I witnessed during their lessons with me. These events caused me to pursue a line of questioning to probe the extent status had as an enduring influence on pupil behaviour. For ease of communication my query made a correlation between a 'strong' teacher and a '*senior*' member of staff. Having set the scene I then progressively introduced factors which might make his/her position less secure so to observe whether boundaries would be shown to shift in accordance to emerging events.

I selected two cohorts to gain insight on the micro cues within these evolving circumstances. Year 7 and Year 9 classes were chosen for two reasons. Firstly, a pragmatic one – they form the majority of my research groups and, secondly, data supports my experience in suggesting a marked change occurs in the period between the two ages (Diagram 5.19 below).



In addition, in response to the earlier question: *'What percentage do you join in'* (with disruptive behaviour) (Diagram 5.4), Y7 recorded the lowest of the 4 Year groups (5.11% - n: 52), whilst Y9 was the highest (18:54% - n: 108). The significance of the adolescence stage as a factor influencing behaviour was illustrated within the literature review.

Changing just one variable – the teacher - I aimed to scrutinise degrees of disruption, asking if the decline in attentive behaviour is instant or incremental according to cues interpreted by the class. I paid particular attention to the prospective influence of three factors I had identified as being pertinent in the 'zone of complexity' diagram:

- (i) status,
- (ii) the teacher's image or persona, and
- (iii) their use of consequences to indicate formal boundaries.

To challenge the idea that a Supply teacher automatically equates to a weak target I posed the following reflective question and defined key terms before building a hypothetical situation. I initially asked:

*Q: What signs would indicate to you that a Supply teacher or new teacher is actually a 'strong' teacher and cause you to resist the temptation to 'mess about'?*

I used the concept of boundaries to explore the effects of various attributes on students' inclination to adapt accordingly:

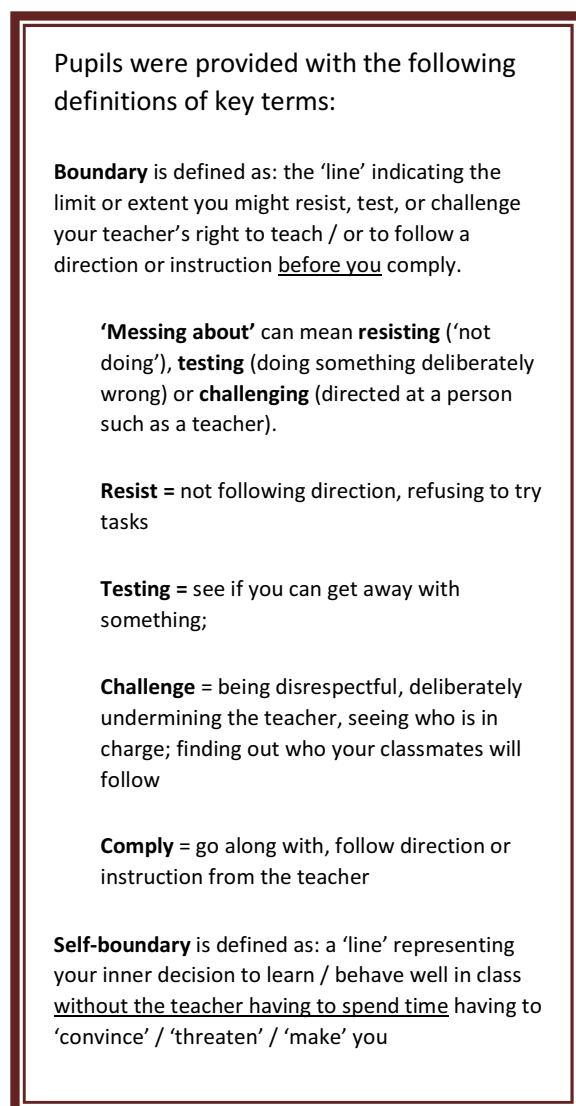


Figure 5.1

Pupils were then given a scenario and asked to grade their likely responses using percentage scores ranging from 100% to zero%. If, for example a pupil is 75% likely to behave, the remaining 25% is shared among the other three categories. The options are colour coded to track responses in the graphs:

*Q1: You are in a lesson where the class usually 'mess about'. The teacher is ill and instead of a Supply Teacher, in walks the Head-teacher / Deputy Head / or any other teacher you consider to*

*be 'strong' or 'important' in the school (we might call them a 'senior' teacher). You do not know them at all as you have never been taught by them but you quickly recognise who they are.*

KEY:	
CHOICES:	TOTAL MUST = 100%
'Mess about' as normal	
'Mess about' if others are	
'Mess about' if you think you can get away with it	
Decide to behave yourself	

Figure 5.2

The scenario adds one variable each time to ascertain whether it is deemed to be a contributory factor in how pupils are likely to respond. Using the pupils' terminology I charted the difference in pupils' perspectives as the hypothetical circumstances altered. Whilst I list the variables here for convenience, I present details of each response in Appendix 5C. Y7 responses (N:27) are shown on the left; Y9 (N:24) on the right. A comparative and summative analysis of results follows below (Diagram 5.20 & section 5.8.5).

Q2: A 'senior' teacher **you know and have previous experience of being 'dealt with' by them;**

Q3: A 'senior' teacher, **you enjoy the subject, though the work is hard and the teacher doesn't know you;**

Q4: A 'senior' teacher who **taught you last year and you have a good relationship with them;**

Q5: A 'senior' teacher who **taught you last year but you don't like them.**

The previously attained description depicting an adult displaying the prominent characteristics of 'strong' staff they knew: strict, but fair; in control of the class; lays down the rules at the beginning; deals with the noise; doesn't smile much; doesn't take any nonsense or put up with rude people, were viewed as influential traits in deterring disruption (5.6). However, I will

proceed to show that data presented in this section suggests that prior relationships, relative anonymity and experience of the teacher emerge as factors which may disturb presumptions about status.

#### 5.8.4: 'Lesser' status

Conversely, in examining the seeming dichotomy between 'strong' and 'weak', I wished to explore further the notion that a 'new' teacher employed to cover the class might conceivably endure disruption regardless of his/her qualities or strategies. Again, this line of inquiry derived from my previous experience as I recalled being a 'successful' Supply teacher early in my career. Whilst I summarise below, the detailed responses for each answer are presented in Appendix 5D (note incremental increases in the purple indicating a decision to behave).

*Q6: A new teacher to the school has now taken over the class from the 'senior' teacher who has been covering for the last three lessons. You do not know the new teacher. Your classmates begin to test and resist by chatting / calling out / not listening etc.*

Q7: A 'new' teacher, they ***keep calm but don't give out sanctions and they are struggling;***

Q8: A 'new' teacher, they are ***getting emotional, but still no sanctions;***

Q9: A 'new' teacher, they are ***getting emotional, and give out sanctions quickly;***

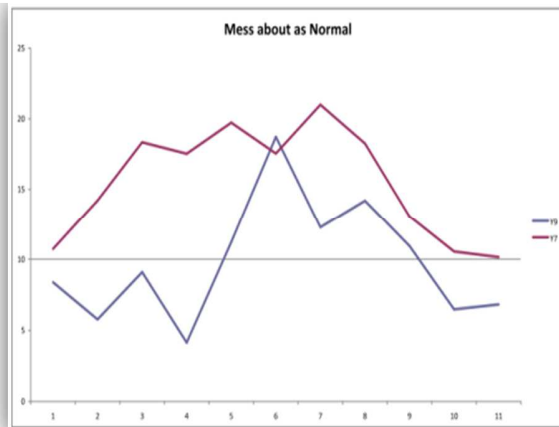
Q10: A 'new' teacher, they ***stay calm, give choice and follow up with sanctions;***

Q11: As above but they ***follow through speaking to your Head of House; your parents, and your tutor.***

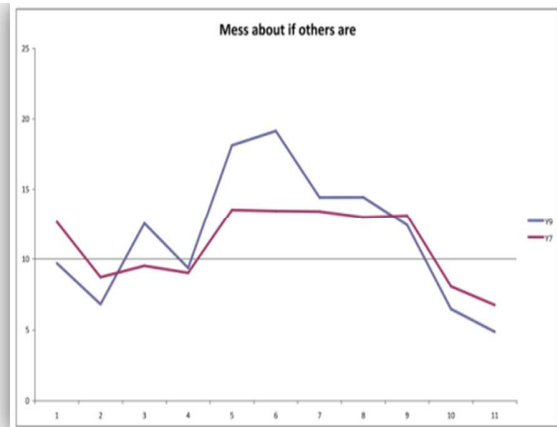


The vertical axis on the graphs below show percentages for each behavioural option indicated in the key; the horizontal axis denote the eleven questions.

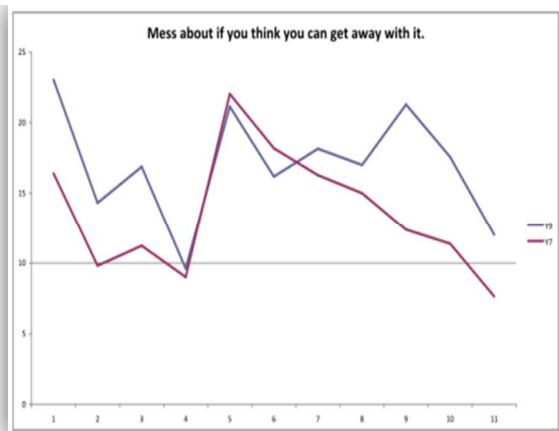
20a



20b



20c:



20d:

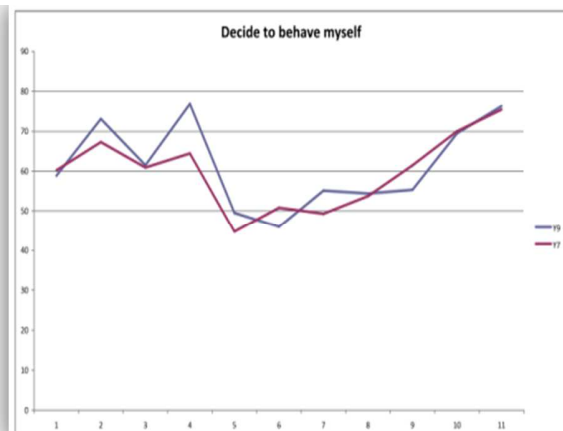


Diagram 5.20

### 5.8.5: Commentary

The first observation is the lines do not remain constant in any of the diagrams, therefore each variable alters the previous stance.

Diagram 20d shows that those children in Y7 (purple line) and Y9 (blue line) who decided to behave themselves have the closest correlation in their responses to variables. The high percentages affirm these represent the majority.

The largest difference occurs between the reasoning of each cohort's 'minority' who decided to 'mess about as normal' despite the presence of a 'senior' teacher (20a). Whilst emerging data has suggested some children were predetermined to take advantage of irregular situations, this surprised me as I assumed the notion of 'senior' teacher would more likely deter younger pupils. This prompted further analysis of Qs 1-5.

Q1: *'recognising but not knowing a 'senior' teacher'* had a comparative impact on the two cohorts. Although the teacher's status was enough to deter the majority (60.22% Y7 & 58.86% Y9), there was still a minority in each group (10.74 & 8.38) who said they would carry on 'messing about' regardless. These pupils might conceivably have been identified as Rain Clouds or with those who appeared prominently in detention data.

The graphs indicate both cohorts then began the process of adapting in various degrees to the cues and signals from the teacher and peers (Q2-Q5). Overall the 'senior' teacher had more of an impact on Y9 than Y7. This suggests longer established relationship in which boundaries were already secured. Q2: *(previously dealt with by 'senior' teacher)*, and Q4: *(previous good relationship)* support this assumption. For Y7 much of the year had been negotiating around 'new' teachers as they adapted from the solitary teacher experienced in Y6. The biggest contributory factor bringing about the likelihood of increased misbehaviour was *if the pupil did not like the teacher* (Q5). This factor seemed to negate some of the deterrence status brought. The insight corresponded with my uncomfortable experience of dealing with unfriendly individuals whilst covering Y10 tutor group, as mentioned in 5.8.3.

The advent of a 'new' teacher impacted on the likelihood of 'messing about as normal' for both Y7 and Y9 (Q6). The two groups recorded almost identical scores (17.54% & 18.72%) in conveying a significant difference from positions they adopted when initially receiving the 'senior' teacher in Q1 (10.74% & 8.38%). Y9 were more likely to join in with peers. Evidence for pupils' variable performance according to contextual factors continued to be apparent. Y9's response to Q7 indicates they were perhaps more empathetic when *the teacher was struggling*. Q9 suggests Y7s were more likely to be responsive to *quick sanctions*, whilst Y9's shifting position may have been due to emotion equating to unfairness and a sense the teacher was 'losing control', so provoking covert disruption (21.29%).

Perhaps the most significant finding is made through a direct comparison between Q1 and Qs10 & 11. Pupil responses to the latter variables reveal the capacity to *stay calm whilst giving a clear choice and following through on consequences* brought 'new' teacher to 'senior' teacher status in the eyes of both cohorts. This is consistent for all four categories of response open to the children, suggesting the measured response deterred disruption and evoked self-boundaries. In addition, the significance of pupils not liking their teacher suggests this factor may have contributed to the subtle differentiation between compliance and cooperation as pupils withdrew their goodwill.

### **5.9: Theorising classroom complexity**

Before I present two brief case studies which consider Trainee teachers as representing distinct variables to group dynamics (see 5.10 & 5.10.1), I pause to theorise the broad themes covered within this chapter thus far through the lens of Complexity Theory. Referring back to the template I have used throughout this chapter to illustrate the concept of progressive boundaries, I have argued teachers who displayed excessive control, and conversely, staff who failed to present appropriate boundaries in the eyes of the pupils, both impinge on the learners' development.

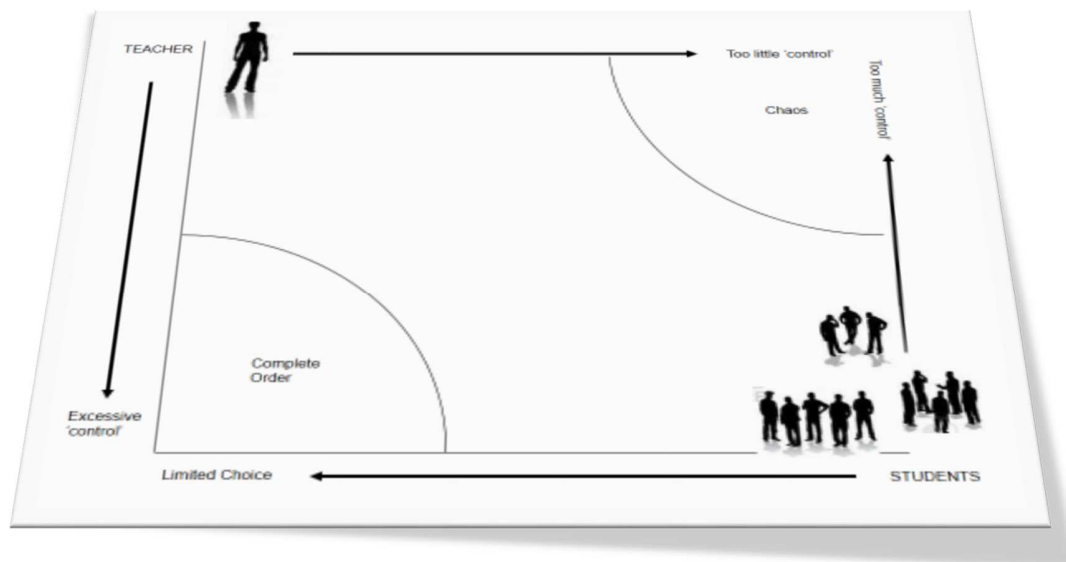


Diagram 5.21

Literature reveals various attempts to conceptualise classroom life through Complexity principles (Rea 1997, Salmon 1999, Finch 2001, Tosey 2002, Radford 2006, Cvetek 2008). Newell (2008) argued, many non-biological systems such as classroom groupings, share most typical properties of complex biological systems. As such I will occasionally exemplify principles through reference to nature to aid comprehension. Mason's (2008: p.8) introduction cited Horn (2008), who suggested that "every teacher needs to understand that she is working within a sensitive learning ecology whose directions can be altered by small changes in the boundary conditions and interaction patterns of the classroom". For example, the 'butterfly effect' (Barranger 2001), a phrase coined by meteorologist Edward Lorenz in 1972, alerted to the sensitivity to initial conditions in having disproportionate effect on emergent events (Gleick, 1987). This is apt to interpret my data examining pupils' interpretation of cues. In addition, the principle is clearly illustrated in Appendix 6C and 6.6.3, to comprehend the impact a solitary new member had in upsetting the group's equilibrium. Diagram 5.22, below offers further explanation of relevant complexity principles.

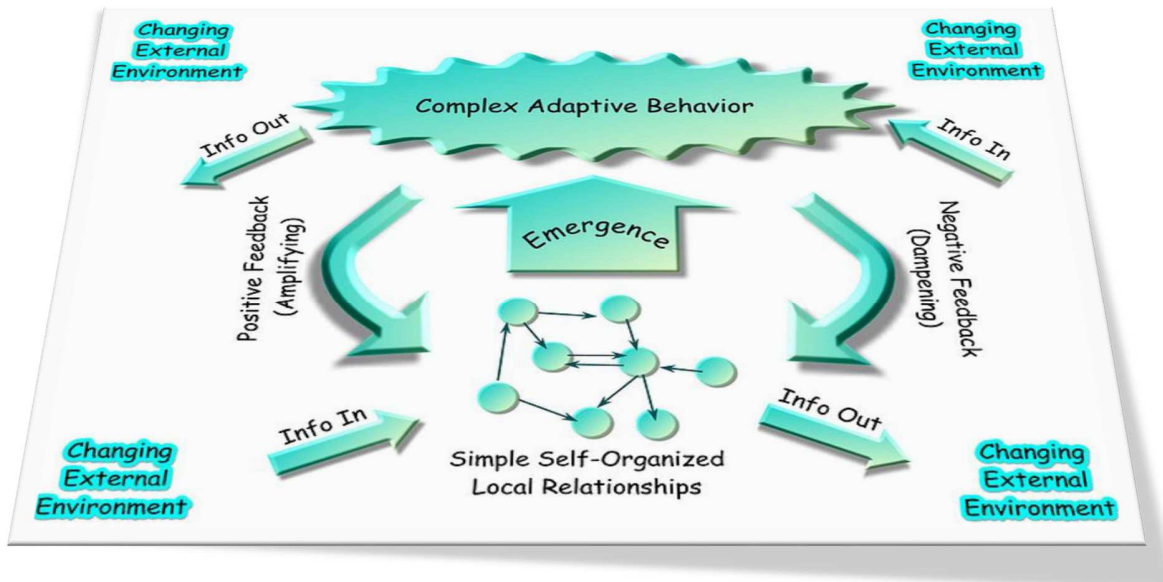


Diagram 5.22

Upon arrival pupils will naturally self-organise absorbing contextual cues before conveying their assessment to others so to influence the group's emergent behaviour. "Emergence is an interplay between both negative and positive feedback" (Newell 2008: p.9); my task was to negotiate a balance to ensure the climate was conducive to learning. This is something I will aim to demonstrate in action research as I attempt to read the mood or flow of the group. Upon assessment I will either infuse or dampen energy accordingly and intermittently so to stimulate, settle, or re-direct. The notion of 'Strange Attractor' (Remer 1998) conceptualises patterns infused with unpredictable details. This descriptor, extended in 6.9.2, is particularly helpful for comprehending the group dynamics in the final sections of this chapter. Complexity theory concepts state the system is sensitive to feedback. For example, the attractor of excitement might escalate into over-excitement. This would likely come through disruptive peers amplifying the system's emergent energy to create a 'run away system' which 'crashes'

(Rea 1997)<sup>4</sup> if the teacher failed to intervene early by ‘dampening’. Further evidence of pupils’ self-organisation and emergence in response to adult feedback and peer affirmation is exemplified by data attained from an unplanned aspect of research presented below.

#### **5.10: Female Trainee Teacher (FTT)**

I was interested to investigate further some of the significant sub-themes emerging from data – in particular, pupils’ perception of and response to those adults whose arrival, as an impromptu authority figure, disrupted some members of the group. The following opportunity provided acute coverage of ‘in-group’/‘out-group’ categorisation.

Accepting the advent of a Supply or Cover teacher disturbed the classes’ established routines, and mindful of the influence of territory (that is, whose room they are in), I was drawn to inquire about the impact if only one significant variable changed – a Trainee teacher would be introduced part way through the year. This focus ensured the standards would remain constant as the Trainee became integrated into the customary procedures. This would make the inquiry more complex than the hypothetical scenarios considered in 5.8.3. Rather than the direct comparison apparent when a Supply or Cover teacher arrived to take charge instead of the usual teacher, these situations enabled the teacher to theoretically build up relationships with pupils whilst the host teacher continued to maintain the established norm. Ideally the Trainees would integrate within the recognised patterns of behavioural exchange between the children and adult. Both the Year 8 classes I surveyed seemed to enjoy the subject when with their regular teachers, in an environment where the norm was for them to behave. After the Trainees had left, I asked retrospective questions to draw out reasons for the reported difference in the classes’ conduct once the host teacher had withdrawn themselves as the primary adult foci for the class.

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<sup>4</sup> In the natural world the unconstrained population growth of some animals is an example of this. ‘Crash’ refers to exponential growth patterns exceeding the capacity of the environment (Rea 1997).

I shared teaching of the first class (Hi) with an experienced colleague. During interviews with the pupils a number of interesting themes emerged. It was immediately clear the Trainee's relationship and strategies were in stark contrast to my colleague's. Merei's (1958) research had shown those who tried to change a group immediately endured rejection, whereas those who worked within a group and gradually introduced innovations were more successful in influencing the group. All twenty pupils interviewed affirmed the Trainee's apparent ineffective strategies and the escalation of off-task behaviour, or resistance once they had tested and worked out the boundaries. The original referenced transcript from the exemplar group is documented in Appendix 5E.

Ensuing dialogue affirmed pupils' perception of authority to be implicit, whilst assumptions which qualified their choices, based in part on external contributory factors such as status and appearance, emerged as unexamined and therefore invited scrutiny. Rather than just cite key phrases from the transcript, I argue the flow of conversation better captures the degree of pupil consensus which was apparent in the interviews. The conclusions the students eventually arrived at affirmed literature in 2.5 and supported the validity of my research. They had recognised the qualities which conveyed authority in their eyes was essentially intangible, yet alluded to the significance of credibility and trust which were derived from their interpretation of experience:

"She like just put her hand up in the air as her signal for us to be quiet... it could be like 5 minutes" said one pupil, quite exasperated. Another recalled the experience and expanded, "At the start she never used the 'C' system [Consequences or 'S' Sanction system] she just like put her hand up and give us like warnings... And then she would say I'll give you a C1 but she never did but like last two weeks she started giving out C1s and that and keeping us back after class".

*"Did that have an effect on you?"* I asked,

“Yeah, we started behaving a bit better”.

*“You started listening to her?”* I probed,

“Yeah” “[But] sometimes she was sending people out for 5 minutes and then getting them back in and then sending another person out for no reason and it was like just not fair telling them all off”.

*“It seems to me you feel there was a bit of unfairness in what was happening”* I empathised,

A moment of unity as all four agreed “Yeah”.

One of the pupils qualified further, “I think more people were getting annoyed with her because sometimes after lessons she would keep us in for 5 or 10 minutes for no reason”

*“The whole class?”* I asked, though knowing the probable answer,

“Yeah”, they all affirmed in unison. The pupil continued, “And people were getting more and more annoyed with her and that’s why they were naughty in the lesson”. Her classmate started to explain the collective rationale for the acts of defiance, “I think when she did keep us back, and this is like school kid behaviour, but it was like we’re not going to work for her if she’s going to waste our time we’re going to try and waste hers”.

Further dialogue led to the children considering their reaction to the prospect of suddenly being aware of my presence in the doorway whilst they were in the midst of their rebellion. The interview led to me challenging many of their underlying



assumptions as I highlighted the contradictions between what they said I represented and their actual experience of me:

"I would probably have shut up and nudged the person next to me and we would have all like seen you and..."

*"Even if I hadn't said anything?"* I interrupted,

"Even if you hadn't said anything, even if you were just standing there". "We would have stopped and listened to Ms" chipped in her classmate.

*"And would you have?"* I inquired looking at a third child.

"Yeah" she nodded.

*"So what happens in your head and the heads of your classmates which directs them to suddenly be quiet?"* I asked with genuine interest.

"We would have got a telling off or something because we were being really naughty" volunteered one. I was fascinated by the freedom in which these thirteen year olds used juvenile terminology to convey their behaviour.

*"But Ms could have told you off"* I stated, mildly challenging the erroneous line of the argument whilst seeking not to belittle her contribution.

"Yeah", she said slowly, absorbing the point.

*"And also consider I have never told you off in our two years together have I?"* I reminded.

"No" all agreed.

I half feigned confusion, *"So where did you get the idea I would give you a telling off?"*

"Well we have you every week and we are used to you..." started one,

*"So it's to do with you knowing me well?"* I interjected,

"Yeah" all affirmed. "Because we know you can control us if you know what I mean" offered one. I came alive. She had inadvertently offered up one of the project's key terms.

*"What do you mean by 'can control you'?"*

"Like..." she paused.

*"Because I can't actually control you can I?"*

"Yeah, but...I'm not sure, I think that I just behave".

I tried to help her out, *"Because I guess I could do C1, C2s and all that"*.

"Yeah" she hesitantly nodded,

*"But then again so could Ms."* I had her snookered.

"Yeah."

*“And I don’t give you C1 and C2s. so what is it about me, my presence in the doorway which means you think ‘I had better shut up’?”*

Her contemplative friend broke her silence to offer her thoughts, “Maybe because we kind of respect you more, we’ve been with you for two years”.

In retrospect I wondered if disapproval might be key here. At the time I took another tack. *“What about if it was the Head-teacher ... you’ve not been with him for two years?”*

“We definitely would stop straight away I think”.

The ensuing discussion covered predictable ground citing status, expectations and relationship before progressing to consider the significance of physical appearance.

*“Is it anything to do with the way someone looks? If you didn’t know me would the way I look stood at the door make any difference?”* I asked.

“Yeah because you’ve got like this, you stand, like really hard if you know what I mean” offered one with an amusing pose and expression to emphasise her point.

“Yeah” agreed her friends.

I sensed an opportunity to probe once again, *“What if I was a smallish woman, would that make a difference?”*

“I think it would, I don’t know, I think we prefer male teachers” said one prompting affirming nods from her peers.

*"Are there some teachers in the school who don't resemble anything of me but you still behave for if you saw them standing in the doorway?"* I asked, knowing full well the answer, as I pictured prominent female staff within the school.

"Ms D" offered one; "Yeah. Ms H" chimed another.

*"So it is not necessarily to do with how someone looks then?"* I clarified.

"No" reflected one; "Not really". "It's the way they stand and talk" one said quickly searching for the right answer.

"Yeah" came the support.

*"The way they present themselves?"* I pondered out loud.

All resounding assertively declared "Yeah" to suggest we were on to something.

Clearly in accordance with Diagram 5.22 (above), this teacher sought to 'dampen' the group's emergent behaviour, yet it did not have the acquired effect. I reflected afterwards on my original line of thought for this study (see 1.2) – is 'it' something someone has, or can 'it' be acquired? Clearly status within the school is a viable factor. However, I was beginning to conclude, two key determinants derived from literature – trust and credibility were integral to exploring the validity of the second possibility – that authority could be acquired. Trust, I believe is earned over time; whilst the degree of credibility attributed to an authority figure is assessed instantly. I argue below, that this is informed by pupils' prejudice and presumptions and is affirmed for them by contextual cues as highlighted in 5.6 and 5.7. The final case study serves to exemplify several threads of inquiry within this chapter.

### 5.10.1: Male Trainee Teacher (MTT)

A second Year 8 class (in addition to the one included in the 14 focus groups) also provided insights. The 23 pupils represented the one specific class my own Trainee experienced behaviour problems with during his three month placement. Overall he had a successful teaching practice, however, this class, containing a strong cohort of boys whose behaviour was recognized as an issue throughout the school, seized the opportunity to test boundaries when I eventually withdrew to allow my colleague to take full control. Months after he left I was able to ask them to reflect on their comparative experiences through posing the weather metaphor to them in a questionnaire. The results are presented in Diagram 5.23 below.

This was significant as all contextual variables other than the teacher were identical. Data also enabled me to compare the stated influences on conduct according to gender (Diagram 5.24).

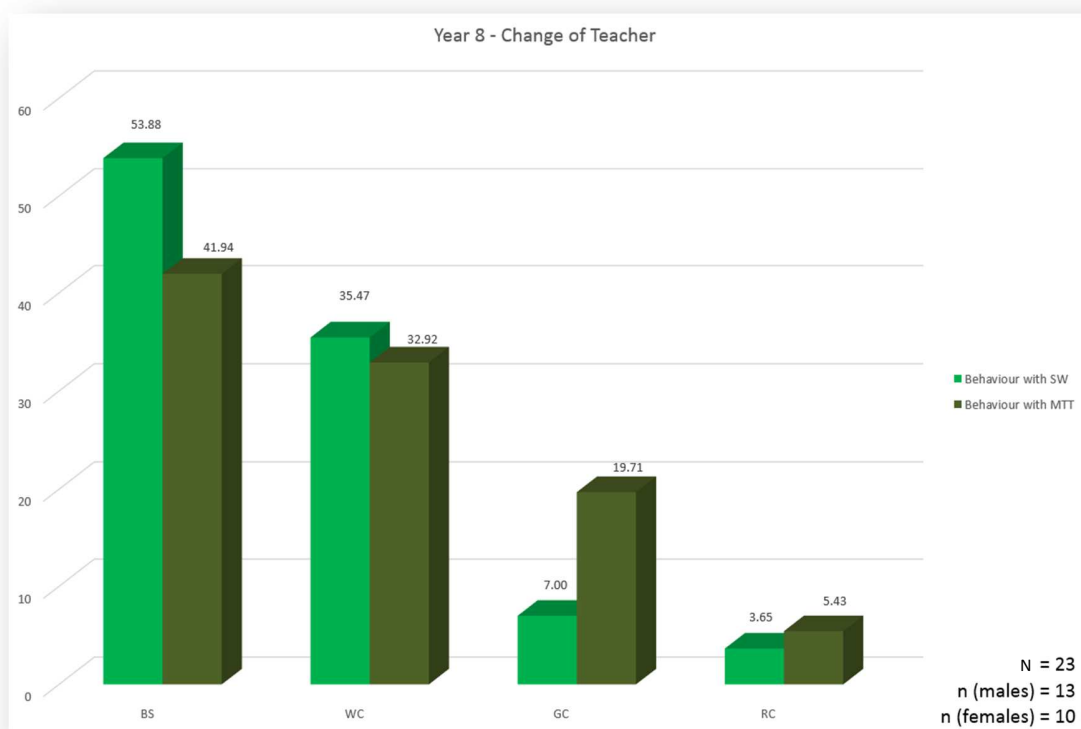


Diagram 5.23

I asked pupils to independently describe behaviour which they observed with MTT but is not seen when I run the lesson.

Pupils wrote of general noisiness and low level disrespect as well as specific acts of disruption such as shouting out, getting out of seats, talking out of turn, throwing things which amplified the emergent behaviour.

*The second question asked students to add some more detail about their choices and to provide reasons for their behaviour and performance.*

Some responses were personal, one claiming misbehaviour was a result of 'not liking him', whilst another attributed the teacher (rather than the lesson) as being boring. Many pupils pointed towards the Trainee's performance as contributory factors citing "Not enough firm punishment, too much warning, not sticking to 'S' [Sanction] system", whilst others alluded to perceived inconsistency and unfairness:

"Sometimes Mr MTT just gave us warnings for no reason (not that we could see) and was really harsh so we just got annoyed and did stuff purposely to annoy him. Anyway the whole class were being bad so I thought it was ok" (TrainF1).

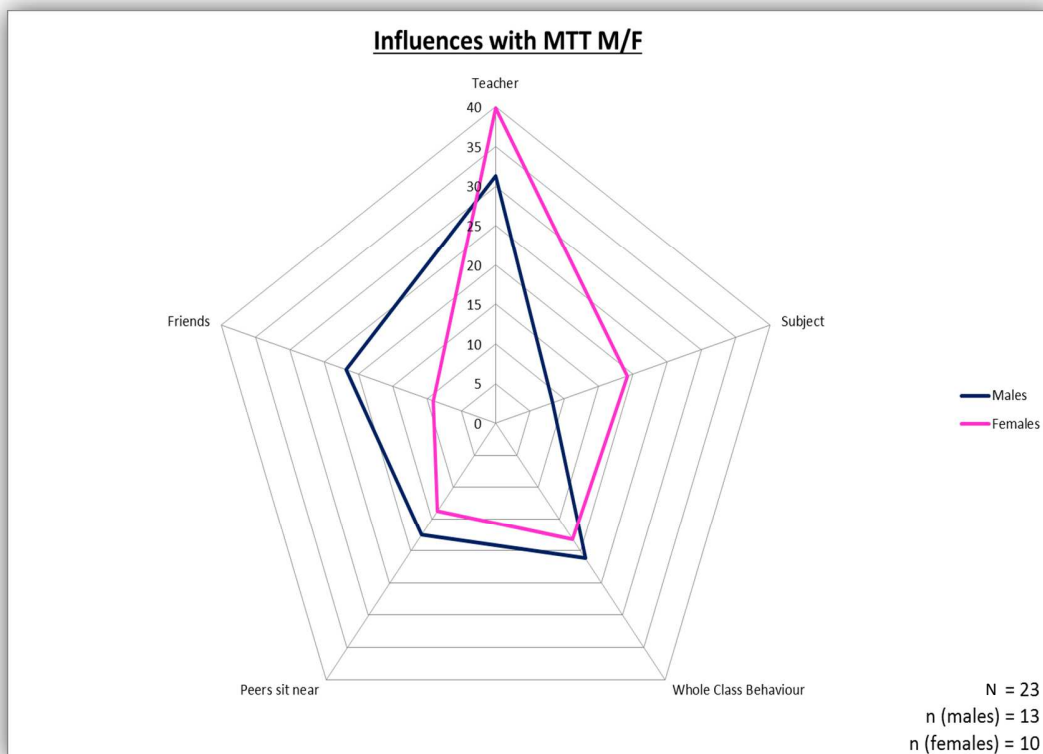
The pupil labelled 'TrainM8' identified himself as the instigator of the class climate, declaring:

"Eighteen people have an audience they perform and everyone was looking to disrupt. Often I was at the centre and led others astray but if they never egged me on I would stop".

The stage on which this specific pupil performed was, I believe, constructed in accordance with two factors identified by female students: one (TrainF6) stating, "The teacher was mainly to

blame as he couldn't control the class"; the other girl (TrainF7) offered a reason "People mess around because he is less like a *proper* teacher" (*italics added*).

The five factors I used earlier (Diagram 5.12) allowed further exploration of the differences indicated in the bar chart (Diagram 5.23 above) between the Trainee teacher and the 'proper' teacher. The data below differentiates between male and female perspectives on reasons for their performance by citing variables which negatively influenced their performance. Accompanying qualitative data suggested pupils were well versed in calculating whether their conduct was likely to be noticed, let alone punished. Diagram 5.24 suggests for girls, their evaluation of the teacher and the subsequent experience of the subject being taught (interpreted as specific learning tasks) was particularly significant. Whilst the boys also cited the teacher as the main differential, they were more prone than the girls to notice their friends. The closest correlation was deemed the factor 'Whole Class Behaviour', or in Complexity terms – emergence from the under-lying dynamics of self-organisation (Lichtenstein & McKelvey 2011).



Unlike FTT, MTT's behavioural approach was not dissimilar to my own. Attempting to decipher the degeneration of the class' performance, I refer to Zimbardo's (1970) process model of de-individuation to better understand the notion of peer amplification (Diagram 5.22). I am aware of the identity of a minority influence in the form of a prominent pupil (TrainM8). He seemed to have been given permission by fellow pupils to experience a sense of power. Although occupying a subordinate hierarchical position, Foucault (1980: p.98) reminded "The individual is ... both an 'object of power' and an 'instrument through which power is exercised': Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain". Langer et al. (1978), wrote of mindlessness to denote when people act before thinking, I surmise that key individuals recognised the conditions of relative anonymity, which led to a sense of reduced responsibility ("everyone" - TrainM8) within a large group and a lack of situational structure leading to heightened arousal. Zimbardo did not define group size although studies often denoted crowds (Mann 1981) and mobs (Mullen 1986). There is evidence of a lower threshold of normal restrained behaviour (Zimbardo 1970). Consistent with Juvonen & Cadigan (2002), attention was focused outwards so people may have overlooked discrepancies between personal moral and social standards and their behaviour as they become absorbed in a sense of group unity (Forsyth 1983). TrainF6 and TrainF7 argued a sense of legitimacy whilst there is a sense TrainM8 was dictating proceedings and his behaviours were influencing others to join him. Le Bon's 1895 classic study *The Crowd* described this process as contagion. Hollander (1981) found such high status individuals are usually protected from sanctions despite some show of non-conformity. Their idiosyncrasy credits, previously earned with the group, prevail unless deviancy is extreme. 'Messing about' and 'Just having a laugh' were frequent terms used in discussion. Huuki et al. (2010) showed humour as a resource and strategy for boys to gain status amongst peers. Meeus & Mahieu (2009) noted students' humour is used as a form of boundary-seeking and boundary-crossing behaviour, whilst having the potential to make a positive contribution to the relationship with a teacher.



On this occasion, as the class cited low level disruptions and general noisiness as descriptors, it seems TrainM8 was able to stay within these peer accepted boundaries. My impromptu reappearance in the middle of this, in Train M8's term, 'performance', was akin to witnessing the breaking of a spell which had gripped the group. In Complexity terms, rather than MTT dampening energy to maintain the group's equilibrium, this sharp modification created a 'first order transition', as the system abruptly shifted from one state to another (Sole et al. 1996)<sup>5</sup>.

Additional comments suggested a key instigator was MTT's (lack of) 'credibility' (Banfield et al. 2006) amongst some pupils (TrainF7: 'not a *proper* teacher' italics added) insinuating incompetence (Zhang 2007). I suggest he had yet to gain their trust. Substantiating findings from Q5 (5.8.3), TrainM5 condensed his response down to 'not liking'. My on-going dialogue with the Trainee affirmed my observation of a competent human being morphed into a persona completely at odds with his natural personality. This resonated with Woods & Carlyle's (2002) descriptors of teachers' incongruence around the notion of identity when placed under stress, as cited in 4.3. The distinction between an authentic individual and the portrayal of an institutional position came to be highlighted independently from a convincing source.

#### **5.10.2: Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs)**

HLTAs are well placed to be unobtrusive observers of classroom interactions. A group interview involving four colleagues, drew out a distinct difference between a teacher who is successful with the children and one who remains distant. Qualifying the former, one stated successful teachers "are confident about showing the students themselves as a person, they have personality; they might say things about their own lives and interests". I wondered whether they were insinuating others played a 'role'.

"Yes", was the reply, "they haven't the confidence to say first of all I am a human being and I have chosen to teach because I like teaching".

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<sup>5</sup> An example from nature would be a cull.

Curious to learn of their observations of adults 'playing a teacher', the HLTA's came to a consensus which highlighted (stiff) body language; (higher) voice; lacking eye contact and being generally more tense. A distinction was also made between them talking *at* students - "we need to get through the lesson so we will do this we will do that and bang, bang, bang, work, work, work". You hear demands "you will do this and we are going to... and [by contrast] talking *to* students". These perennial observers concluded those teachers who tended to experience more difficulties with pupils "concentrated on content rather than the kids".

Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2006), in contemplation of the perceived split or tension NQTs' experience between themselves as 'persons' and themselves as 'teachers', wrote of an inevitable tentativeness. Ever mindful of expectations purporting what a teacher 'should' be (Goodson & Cole 1994), and fearful that their personal selves are not acceptable or appropriate, Rodgers & Raider-Roth identified an undermining of trust in self, and thus their pupils' trust in them. The remoteness of an artificially constructed notion of who he ought to be, made 'presence' difficult for MTT and brought about a disconnection with the group.

### **5.11: Ofsted 2011**

Data (2008-2011) confirmed pupils' 'disruptive' behaviour was still prevalent in the school during my research period, with recorded incidents in excess of 4000 punished by detention. Prior to my leaving the school, and towards the end of my data collection, Ofsted (2011) again judged behaviour in the school to be 'good'.

Inspectors drew on 278 responses from parents and carers to an Ofsted questionnaire:

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.	63	23	171	61	33	12	11	4

Table 5.10

The report stated: “Students enjoy their learning and their good behaviour contributes to their high quality learning... Pupils’ behaviour – grade 2.” Grade 2: Good is defined as: “... very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well” (p.11).

### 5.12: Summary:

At the start of my quest to improve pupils’ behaviour in my school, I would have uncritically accepted the simplistic generalization inherent within the wording of the Steer Committee Report (2005: p.5). In agreement with Ofsted (2004) findings, the report claimed:

“...the great majority of pupils work hard and behave well, and that most schools successfully manage behaviour to create an environment in which learners feel valued, cared for and safe”.

This generality is challenged by this chapter. In conjunction with my school's Ofsted judgment, the conclusion was that "the great majority of pupils *do* work hard and behave well...." My field data suggests the 'majority' *can* work hard and behave well. However, this esteemed condition, associated with order, was shown to be punctuated by passive conformity for around a third of the time (Diagram 5.3). Of the 334 students surveyed only five claimed they were motivated to do well in *all* their lessons by recording 100% for BS. Thus, although students' estimated between 84.35% - 88.86% of their conduct was ordered (Diagrams 5.3 & 5.4), 32.21% of the collective time of participants was defined by simply complying with demands (Diagram 5.3). Perhaps this is illustrative of Whitehead's (2009) assertion that much learning pupils experience isn't educational (see 3.3.2). The nature of the teaching and learning experience is considered integral to addressing this state of impassive engagement within my lessons. Paradoxically, despite identifying a significant minority who habitually and wilfully disrupted learning, only 13 of the pupils claimed they were completely devoid of cooperative behaviour in their lessons (by recording 0% for BS). As only one pupil was devoid of BS & WC behavior, the remaining 321 students – the 'majority' *can* work hard and 'behave' well in certain circumstances. My research in Chapter Six will strive to cultivate such circumstances, documenting successes and identifying constraints to cooperation.

The circumstances are portrayed as highly sensitive, especially at the beginning of lessons (5.6). All children surveyed in Diagram 5.4 (n: 241) witnessed disruption some of the time, with the vast majority periodically involved to some degree (Table 5.1). The cumulative effect was minimal in terms of time recorded (Diagram 5.4), though, according to recorded language, was expressively detrimental to teacher's psyche (5.5.3) as they became entangled with a significant minority (Table 5.3). Those exhibiting Rain Cloud traits were very likely to be integral to the occurrence and degree of disruption. Detentions were more likely to be administered to males (Table 5.4) who tended to infringe general rules, such as chewing and lateness as well as rules around behaviour (5.5.4). 'C3' sanctions were more likely to be issued as the day progressed (Diagrams 5.7 & Table 5.8). Status was largely determined by ex facto authority, but could deteriorate if prominent pupils successfully tested boundaries (5.7), disengaged with learning

(5.7.1), and the child looked beyond the role to personally dislike the teacher or perceiving them to be unfair (5.8.3 Q6; 5.10; 5.10.1). These determinants also applied to 'senior' teachers.

I also take issue with the second part of Steer's statement. My data suggests an ordered classroom does not necessarily equate to a climate in which "learners feel valued, cared for and safe". Section 5.6.1 showed staff who carry the mantle of being 'effective' may exude authority which merely evokes compliance through fear and dominance (5.6.2). In addition, perhaps understated, are the shared environments where *the teacher* might not feel valued, cared for, or (psychologically) safe (5.5.3; 5.7; 5.10; 5.10.1). As these pupils entered my classroom for one hour per week, these considerations acted as stimuli for addressing the negative ramifications which defined my established performance. I will show in Chapter Six, my anger and dominance masked deep seated, previously unexamined fears.

Before I seek to examine the student behaviour I witnessed in my lessons, I reiterate the study's identified problem – it is primarily for me to evolve from the 'effective' teacher described in the ontology, and whose traits are defined by so many pupils in 5.6. The process engaged with my propensity to control others and events, it addressed my inclination to react and dominate. The test-bed of the classroom has been identified as dynamic, hosting an array of competing needs and agendas.

My action phase explored: *Whether non-authoritarian teacher approaches can steer pupils to contribute towards a well-ordered class dynamic*. I am mindful that the broad categories presented in this chapter to convey instances of contestation, compliance, and low level resistance are inherent in every child I teach. The coming together of individuals to temporarily form unique and dynamic groupings contains the potential for each of these behavioural attributes to manifest at any point, during any lesson. My task was to anticipate, to recognise and to respond to these inevitable moments so they did not escalate to draw peers in, nor disintegrate into conflict with me. I also aimed to notice and appreciate the positive (or 'White

Space' see 4.2.1) so establishing a norm in which the pupils recognised disruption as being inappropriate.

The next chapter scrutinizes subsequent relational, psychological and pedagogical complexity. Throughout I engage with the spectrum of student behaviour as expressed arbitrarily through cooperative relationships, as well as defiant individuals, obstinate sub-groups, and established social allegiances largely averse to learning requirements.

I show the requirements for compliance, and the need to revert to sanctions, can be effectively limited to specific and appropriate occasions, thus encouraging self-discipline to become the norm as pupils recognise boundaries which enable learning. I consider how teachers might operate to achieve this, to have 'presence' by being 'present', encouraging a state, a space, where neither overbearing force nor chaos governs proceedings. Here, I argue, pupil energy need not descend into disruption, nor evoke the teacher's inclination to suppress, but instead might be harnessed to produce an emergent, cooperative classroom climate which enhances both learning and relationships. Bigger (forthcoming: p.4) applies the concept of liminality to describe this "state in-between authoritarian hierarchy ('structure') and social freedom/well-being (*communitas*), [recognising the negotiation as] a continuing process of readjustment".

I envisage operating in the zone of complexity (Stacey et al. 2000), without reverting to a draconian system or domineering personality, instead I hope to interpret apparent disorder as a creative opportunity for greater democracy and pedagogical choice. Research has shown that encouraging opportunities for choice-making can be effective in reducing occurrences of problem behaviour (Shrogren et al. 2004). As a practitioner-researcher, I was ever wary of the possibility that pupils' interpretation of apparent disorder might provoke conduct in which relative freedom descends into disarray. The nature of my concern has been articulated by pupils as part of their experience of school. Their perspectives provide an understanding as to what extent their behaviour is dependent on contextual factors when they sense conditions which convey ambiguity. As such, I place an initial emphasis on establishing boundaries within a

transparent structure. From this foundation I hoped pupil and theoretical insights would enable me to increasingly trust my students as we moved away from a constrained experience of pedagogy to partake in risk and uncertainty.

## Chapter Six: Action Research

### 6.1: Reiterating aims

This chapter addresses my central aim, stated in 1.5 as *an attempt to cultivate learning conditions which minimise contestations and build more positive teacher-pupil relationships*. The previous chapters showed how an authoritarian school climate emerged, I unpicked its underlying philosophy, elaborated its limitations, and suggested it was complicit in generating behaviours among teachers and pupils which undermined relationships and learning. This action phase attempted to replace this climate with a different underlying philosophy, that of relational pedagogy. The onus is on being respectful of pupils, so to encourage them to be self-controlled and cooperative. This addresses the concerns about my own behaviour documented in Chapter Four, and is mindful of pupils' susceptibility to contextual cues presented in Chapter Five.

There were many uncertainties in devising such an action plan. Changing my personal teaching style, from authoritarian to relational, was personally difficult. Second, it was impossible to predict how pupils would respond to the change, whether they would embrace it or seek to take advantage of the trust I afforded them. Third, it was not clear the extent to which new strategies adopted by a single teacher would mesh with the whole school. However, as I explained in the previous chapter, pupils do behave differently with different teachers and I hoped that my presentation of boundaries would not stifle their performance or growth; nor would my intention to harness greater democracy signal an opportunity to disrupt learning.

As a relational pedagogy encouraged dialogue and discussion, so the actions I am describing here were carried out *with* pupils rather than *to* them. My preparation for entering the action phase was drawn from many sources discussed in previous chapters. In summary they included:

- A moral/ethical imperative that good school relationships should model positive life relationships;

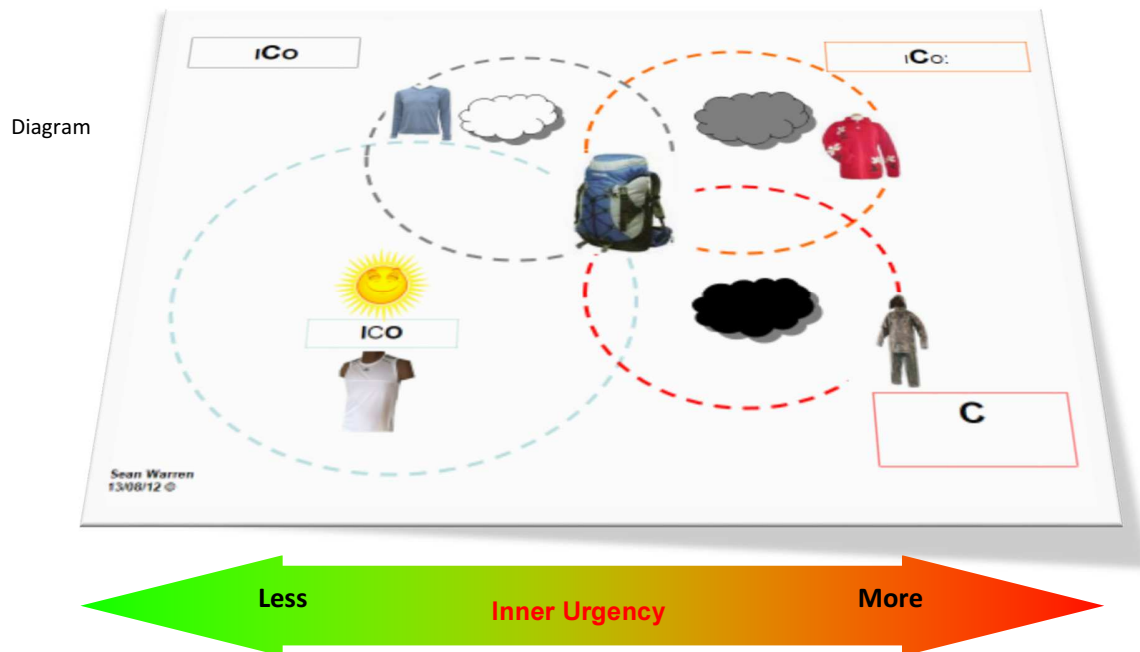


- An alignment between the values I espoused and my actions;
- To theorise the distinction between authoritative and authoritarian using Transactional Analysis (TA) as a structural model. The hope was that classroom relations could be defined by my ability to function from 'Adult' so to consistently *respond* to situations rather than *react*;
- To demonstrate how the concepts of 'respect', 'fairness', 'responsibility', and 'trust' provide an effective foundation for authority and learning;
- To utilise pedagogy as a positive interaction between teacher and pupils.

The selection signifies that I placed an emphasis on my performance as a precursor for establishing a healthy classroom climate where all benefit – including me. Ensuing coverage contains several interconnecting elements to convey the complexity of my experience and thus research. I begin by examining my preliminary work with the *groups*, then I document my interactions with testing *individual pupils* and a *sub-group* and present the subsequent reflexive interrogation these uncomfortable issues prompted. This aspect expands on my ontology from Chapter One. I proceed to reveal how a study of a group's underlying social dynamics changed my relationship with a challenging *class*. Finally, I show how reviewing the *pedagogical process* contributed to my aims. A summarisation of the pupils' collective verdict on both their own and my performance concludes the chapter. Key to my performance in each of these areas of research was my negotiation and use of control. As demonstrated in 5.6, too much control and I would continue to elicit mere compliance, too little and I would expose myself to pockets of testing, resistance, and challenge. My disciplinary approach extends the metaphor which describes pupils' behaviour as being akin to variable meteorological conditions.

The diagram below illustrates, as with the weather, unilateral control of pupils' behaviour is illusory (Mason 2008). However, as a teacher occupying the position of responsible adult, I was required to uphold school rules stipulated in policy. Within these broadly accepted boundaries I aimed to demonstrate an ability to administer varying degrees of control in accordance to the emergent circumstances. For example, I reasoned the pupils' self-control apparent during Blue

Skies (bottom left) ensures the adult is able to yield control (C), whilst the manifestation of Rain Cloud traits (bottom right) warrants a strong directive response in accordance with school disciplinary procedures.



6.1: 'Dynamic C'

The degrees of 'control' are symbolised by different clothing the teacher 'wears' or operationally adopts in response to the adaptive conditions. The amount of material in the clothing is representative of a disciplinary approach which complements the climate – e.g. a vest is worn in response to 'sunny conditions'; in contrast to the 'waterproofs' which are adorned in the event of 'rain'. In essence, the diagram purports 'appropriate' control and recognises its application as dynamic. Hart's (2010) research on effective behaviour management concluded there was no one specific technique or approach that could be identified, rather a number of elements contributed (Little and Akin-Little 2003). Marzano's (2003) meta-analysis of classroom management techniques which 'work best' affirmed a combination of different aspects. This is further endorsed by DfE's (2012e) concluding remarks in their review of pupil behaviour in schools in England. A detailed analysis of the four

respective garments which, I argue, if suitably worn exudes a sense of fairness and competence, is presented within the chapter. Although a definitive formula remains elusive, the approach addresses the concerns inherent in descriptors of strict, lapse and inconsistent teachers that pupils described in Chapter Five. In consideration of authority, Bigger (forthcoming: p.9) articulated the inappropriateness of polarised stances in an educational setting, suggesting the attitude of an educational establishment comes within a continuum: if it is too authoritarian it is repressive, forcing compliance rather than enabling independence; alternatively “if there are no boundaries and rules, a pecking order will quickly establish who holds real authority, by dominance and aggression rather than through wisdom”.

## **6.2: Distribution of classes**

Section 5.5.6 showed the possibilities for disruptions increased incrementally as the day progressed from lesson 1 to lesson 5. The timetabling of research classes over the three years is evenly distributed throughout the school day and across the week so to demonstrate reported effectiveness was not confined to specific periods. I did not teach on Wednesdays. In addition to the 14 groups who contributed to Field data in Chapter Five, two additional classes were integral to my reflexive process as they contained challenging pupils. These are denoted as \*8 to highlight my interaction with a significant individual, and \*\*10 to identify my research on an obstructive sub-group. Both of these offer insight into critical moments and are presented in 6.6.2 and 6.6.3. Unscheduled curriculum events impacted on my intention to administer questionnaires during their concluding lesson with me. Dealings with participants within the sixteen groups underlined the reality that interactions are always unique.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Monday</b>		Y9	Y7 Y7		
<b>Tuesday</b>		Y7	*8		**10
<b>Wednesday</b>					
<b>Thursday</b>	Y7		Y9 Y9	Y10	
<b>Friday</b>	Y7	Y7	Y8	Y9 Y9	Y10

Table 6.1

### 6.3: Classroom climate

At the beginning of their course, each individual would be carrying their own provisional imago based on their prior experience of groups and their previous contact or / and perception of me. The significance of prior knowledge of a teacher's standards or approach was illustrated in 5.5.8. Section 5.6 indicated teachers' reputations are relayed through peer dialogue. Chapter Five consistently showed pupils' sensibility to classroom climate was most acute at the beginning of interactions. I sought to ensure boundaries were apparent upon first contact with the groups, and were subsequently reinforced through routines each time we reconvened (see 6.4.1). Rather than constrain pupils, I hoped the clarity might represent a sense of security from which to develop positive relationships and to tolerate uncertainty in learning. Gerlach & Bird (2006) refer to findings in neuroscience to affirm the importance of relationships to determine whether children are adequately able to access the cognitive or 'thinking' brain.

In recognition of the needs of a developing group, and mindful of its individual members, Temple's (1992a) Four Model Link Up (below), presents two models with an emphasis on the individual, and two with a group focus. Considered together, the diagram shows how the developmental phases require varying aspects of leadership functioning as the group process unfolds (Temple 2005). I select data to illustrate my engagement with each stage and focus on

some of the obstacles which impeded us from moving seamlessly through one stage to the next.

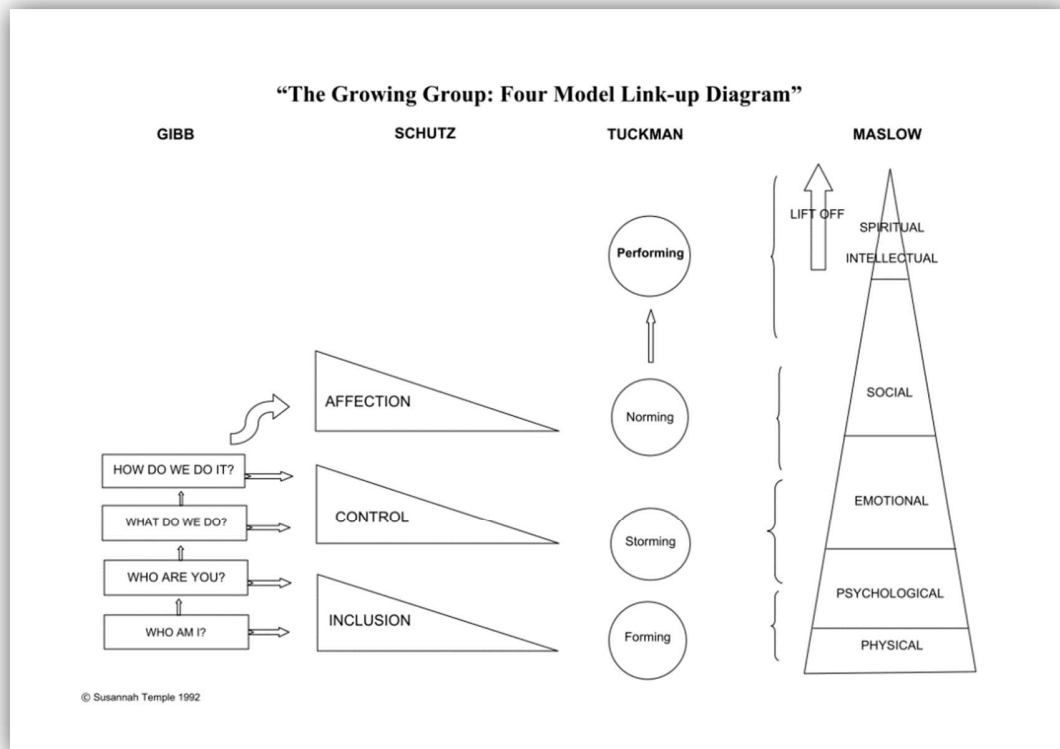


Diagram 6.2

The sections at the base of the diagram represent the early stage of group formation. Temple (1992b) uses the model to articulate the unconscious concerns of pupils as they converge for the first time:

- group questions about *who the group members are* (Gibb 1978)
- an initial focus is whether to join in or not: *“Can I belong here?”* (Schutz 1979)
- the first stage is foundation forming, related to the adjustment of the provisional imago (Tuckman 1965)
- basic stages are the most primitive and concerned the sense of survival, both physical and psychological. (Maslow 1950)

In accordance with insights from 5.6, I was keen that significant pupils took their cue to behave well from me so to influence susceptible peers.

#### **6.4: Initial FORMING phase**

Thus the deliberate aim of my initial meeting with groups was to convey a sense of safety and care, within a structure framed by transparent boundaries. This involved a genuine welcome and an invitation to come into the room without the formalities of lining up outside. This amendment was in recognition that sub-groups converging outside classrooms were more likely to engage in boisterous behaviour which then had to be dispersed upon entering the classroom. Previously my practice was to ensure a straight line before insisting they entered in silence. My attention would have been on ‘stamping down’ on individuals I perceived as seeking to disturb my class. The decision to funnel pupils into the room as they arrived meant I was able to shape the classroom climate so influencing incoming individuals as they joined us. Positioning myself so to monitor the evolving group, I made a commitment not to get distracted by administration tasks which prevented me from paying attention to individuals as they entered. This allowed me to make enquiries of their day and well-being. Now I hoped pupils, despite their reservations about the relevance of my subject to their ambitions and interests, would feel accepted and increasingly experience a sense of belonging and confidence as I gave them permission to inquire of friends, whilst being responsible for getting themselves ready for learning. I am mindful of Morgan et al.’s (2010: p.191) claims for strong evidence that “it is the *absence* of positive experiences which undermined commitment and efficacy rather than the *occurrence* of negative events” (original emphasis). In the first lesson I tend to insist on an initial seating plan which sits the students as boy/girl. I then inform the pupils that I am open to possibly amending and trialling different combinations as the term progresses. During research I had explored allowing peers in a Y10 class to choose their seating arrangements. Similar to my experience of covering a tutor group (see 5.8.3) I witnessed both overt and covert resistance to

learning through the establishment of several cliques. Reverting back to a formal seating plan instantly dissipated the uncharacteristic opposition.

#### 6.4.1: Reinforcing cues during Re-Forming process

The idealistic aim is to be able to 'wear a vest' as the group initially forms, and subsequently at the beginning of each lesson. Whilst some pupils allowed this due to their cooperative nature, my experience affirmed such a stance would inevitably leave the teacher feeling exposed as 'clouds formed overhead'. Field data depicting the students' propensity to interpret signals and read cues meant some perceived an open, caring welcome as a sign of weakness.

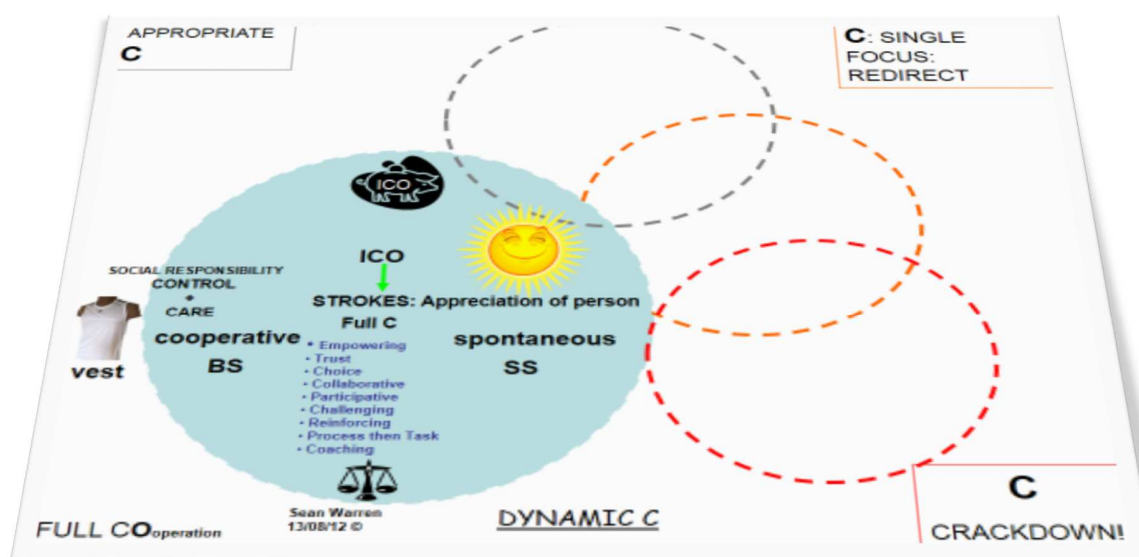


Diagram 6.3<sup>6</sup>

Although I can advocate giving, in TA terms, genuine 'strokes', or units of recognition (Barrow et al. 2002) through *appreciating* the individual for who they *are* (rather than what they do), I

<sup>6</sup> It is noted the 'Relationship Bank Account' from Chapter 5 is informed by Schutz' FIRO theory categories of 'ICO' (included in Diagram 6.2 and defined imminently). 'Deposits' are submitted when participants feel significant, competent and valued; extracted when feeling ignored, humiliated or rejected. Alongside 'competence', I view 'trust' as being integral to significant 'deposits'.

found the necessity to create learning conditions which gave the meeting context and purpose, required a more formal structure to sustain it. This was to ensure proposed opportunities for pupils to be more independent and interdependent did not descend into 'chaos' as characterised by social distractions and power struggles.

The establishment of an optimum foundational state, decreed as a sense of order derived from goodwill, is subject to further explanation. I make a subtle distinction between Blue Skies (BS) and Sunshine (SS). For the sake of simplicity I chose to use the generic term Blue Skies in questionnaires and graphs to encompass this constructive category. However, Temple's (2004) Functional Fluency (FF) model enabled me to articulate distinctive attributes only a minority of children have demonstrated to me throughout my career. 'Sunshine' stems from the spontaneous mode of the 'Free-Child' (Appendix 6A). My experience of these children had thus far been undefinable. They exhibited a 'spark' which I found energizing, as though schooling could not dampen their natural exuberance. BS is accurately associated with cooperative pupil conduct as it is a mode of behaviour which develops from the socialising of the child. It suggests, as the expectations inherent within the role of pupil begin to become established, the well-adjusted child is able to exercise positive traits which enable them to communicate and function effectively with others. However, Chapter Five showed even pupils who habitually display these positive characteristics are susceptible to peer pressure if the teacher is ambiguous, or fails to convince significant pupils they are representative of the school's boundaries.

Hence, the most appropriate attire to adorn whilst the group formed, and at the beginning of each subsequent lesson, was a 'Light Jumper' (below). This approach caters for the reality that some children will arrive harbouring negative thoughts which may lead to passivity, whilst others converge with strong social agendas which can undermine the crucial establishment stage. The category represents the formal stance which I used to settle the group at the beginning of lessons (and the year), and a position I reverted to intermittently as I was called to (re)establish a sense of calm and order to the climate. The approach incorporates more control



than 'Vest' as it habitually includes directives as part of the communication with the group. Elements qualifying this considered response and the experience of those it impacted on are presented below.

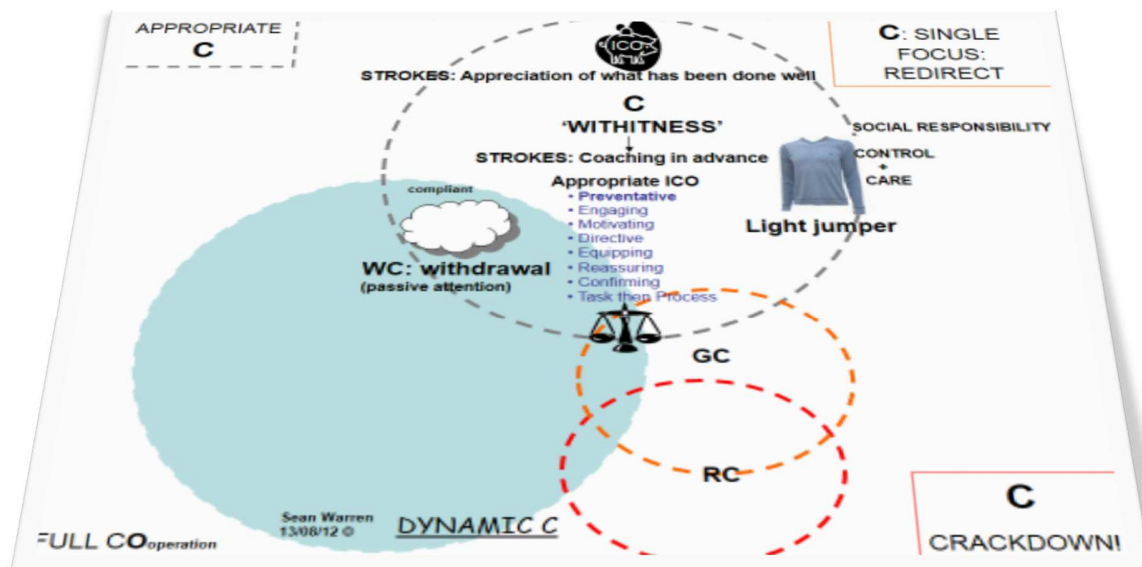


Diagram 6.4

Building a picture of classroom climate, I describe the established procedures I constructed and present pupils' initial impressions upon entering the classroom. In response to the question: *How would you describe your experience at the beginning of lessons in my classroom*, prominent key terms (mentioned a total of 229 times) confirm a sense of *organised calmness*, which is *quiet* and *relaxed* enabling pupils to *settle* and *chat* as they got themselves *ready*. As one Y8 girl summed up:

"We usually just get into class, get our stuff out and give out the books and just have a two minutes break and then start the lesson" (8Fri3F9).

The terms and quotation capture the balance between structure and freedom through expectations encapsulated in routines. This encompasses the essence of ‘coaching in advance’. Routines were explained, discussed, agreed, recorded and practiced in the first lesson before any subject content was considered. The entry and settling period conveyed norms of behaviour with the security of knowing what was coming next. I deliberately wandered amongst the group having positioned myself initially near the open door. My persona was noted by a group of pupils ranging from Y7 to Y10 who wrote<sup>7</sup>:

“Mr Warren always welcomes people even if he is under pressure / stress; ... he waits till everyone comes in to the classroom; ... he always seems happy to see us; I feel... looked after because he takes in account your problems and feelings; ...; As soon as we walk in he says hello with a smile; we are welcomed because he always smiles”.

Mindful of the notion of ‘face’ (see 2.8), I was able to smile, greet and remind as individuals passed me to join classmates who had already started the process of getting and giving out equipment; others were having a drink and chatting whilst getting themselves acclimatized. Bags placed under the table and coats on the back of chairs were also signs which distinguished this environment from many others in the school. Rud (1995: p.123) drew upon Nouwen (1975) to advance the notion of ‘hospitality’. Primarily it refers to:

“The creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. ... Teaching therefore, asks first of all the creation of a space where students and teachers can enter into a fearless communication with each other”.

Contributing to the different phases of the lesson was the use of music. Selected classical tracks played in the background rather than dominating the room. The volume was selected to monitor noise levels. If the music could not be heard it suggested some of the children were a little too excitable and needed a subtle reminder to calm down. Music was mentioned by pupils

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<sup>7</sup> All references in this chapter to pupils’ comments which are not stated in the text, are collated in Appendix B.

throughout the questionnaire. Terms such as *calm, soothing, peaceful, nice, and background* were prominent descriptors. Conversely, if the atmosphere was flat 'pop' music was used to provide an upbeat feel to accompany the tasks.

My movement to the front of the classroom occurred after I announced "starting in 30 seconds". A 10 second warning usually accompanied the cessation of music as I moved to the centre of the room. It was here a directive rather than a request signalled their attention was required: "*AND STOP... PENS DOWN ... (looking around)... LOOKING THIS WAY... (surveying the room and making eye contact)...AND LISTEN; (pause) THANK YOU" – GOOD MORNING..."*

A shortened version within the hub of learning interaction is Rogers' (2002) "*EYES & EARS THIS WAY, THANKS*" (whilst describing obstructs I see - e.g. "*one or two still tapping with equipment*"; then repeating direction "*pens down, eyes & ears this way... thanks*"). If the room was full of energy and enthusiasm I tended not to compete but instead sought to infuse by breaking into loud rhythmic banging on the lockers (*bang bangabangbang*) to elicit a concluding response to the beat from the pupils (*bang bang*). This was often repeated in quick succession until the vast majority were diverted from their former focus to join in. Their collective response left a split second of silence which I filled with affirmation or a directive such as "*pens down...*" I was also versed in apologising for interrupting and providing the class with information which informed how long I needed their attention for.

An alternative signal the pupils came to recognise was a high pitched bell which announced the end of a settling down period and the beginning of my instructions. Allowing a selected pupil to act as proxy also brought attention and acted to minimise the number of times I had to insist on attentiveness.

The expectations conveyed through routines were supported by an immaculate classroom which was left by the preceding class. Tables were aligned, litter was put in the bin and light and warmth were carefully monitored in response to the weather outside of the room. This

stipulation was influenced by Kelling & Coles' (1996) 'Broken Windows' theory, which suggested that signs of neglect escalated unsociable behaviour. Whilst pupils from other classes waited to enter adjoining rooms, typically pushing and jostling outside in the inadequate available space, my groups had settled and were primed for an opening task. This would either aim to capture their interest or to reinforce previous learning in readiness for the opening activity. In accordance with Fiedler's (1978) leadership model, I emphasised task until I got to know the groups and cultivated relationships.

#### **6.4.1.1: With-it-ness**

Central to the persona I deliberately adopted whilst 'wearing a light jumper', was the concept of '*with-it-ness*'. This was to influence pupils' interpretation of my standing as an authority figure. It complemented the intention to be 'present'- "bringing one's whole self to full attention so as to perceive what is happening in the moment" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth 2006: p.267). Providing a pragmatic strategy to my philosophical stance, with-it-ness is defined as a teacher's communicating to the pupils by her/his actual behaviour that s/he knows what the pupils are doing – they have the proverbial 'eyes in the back of the head'.

I am required to transmit the degree to which I am 'with-it'. Kounin (1970) suggested this is best demonstrated through desist events. Desist events are examples of incidents where I do something that *communicates to the children* whether I know (or don't know) what is happening. In desist events a pupil is doing something and I do something about it and they stop. Hargreaves et al. (1975) asked whether the teacher was able to pick the correct target; did they do it on time; or, did they make some kind of mistake that communicated the information that they didn't know what was happening?

The idea of a 'lighthouse' constantly surveying all the surrounding area is another helpful metaphor for this attribute. As one Y9 pupil identified: "*They have eye contact with you ... and address the whole class aware of what everyone is doing*" (9FRI4F4). Thus the term 'with-it-

ness', coined by Kounin (1970), describes the capacity to be aware of a wide variety of things that are simultaneously going on in a classroom. This is a constant challenge for any teacher and can be a particular strain for a new teacher until this skill is acquired. Teachers perceived to be 'with-it' are able to anticipate and to see where help is needed, where and when they might get drawn into a psychological game (see 6.6.3.1). They are able to nip trouble in the bud. They are skilful at scanning the class whilst helping individuals, and they physically position themselves accordingly so to use peripheral vision. They are alert, they can pre-empt disturbances, and they can act fast. They can sense the way a class is responding, they can read the climate and can act to maintain a positive atmosphere. As two students observed:

“At the beginning of the year he made it clear he doesn't tolerate misbehaving and I saw that he wasn't wrong when he dealt with a few silly boys (Y7THUR110/11F4); I figured sir out by someone who took it too far and he sorted it” (Y7TUES210/11F12).

It would be apparent to any observer that there is a degree of calmness and order amongst my groups. I was interested to gain the pupils' perspectives. I asked two further questions – one subjective, the second objective to attain a comprehensive view and wondered whether their collective responses would identify the value underlying my performance at the beginning of each and every lesson – the value of 'respect'.

**Q:** *Can you help me understand what it is I do or the way I am that influences your behaviour in my classroom?* (N: 246).

**Q:** *Why do you think most classmates choose to go to the beach and ignore the rocks in my lessons?* (N: 240).

As explained in Chapter Five, the pupils were familiar with a metaphor I use later in the study to convey the pedagogical interaction. 'Beach' signifies order; 'water' represents learning; the 'rocks' indicate disruption.

#### **6.4.1.2: Respect**

Many of the students seemed to recognize and respond to a reciprocal relationship which is defined by *mutual* 'respect' (50 mentions). Also significant for me are two other aspects. The first is the identification of 'fun' (151) / 'funny' (77). Although I used a repertoire of jokes, silly walks, wigs and masks, it has become apparent to me that this description is of me at my best as a human being. It is when I am most at ease with myself and my surroundings and my conduct is not governed by me playing a role. That much of my subject content was of a serious nature (ethical and moral issues) required me to display a sense of proportion and appropriateness. I was aware, that on occasion, a quip has backfired and embarrassed a child (which I was quick to apologize for), and other times I had unwittingly offended through comments which had pricked sensitive ears. A minority have also provided verdicts through this research process declaring the jokes are just not funny! Data showed a couple of individuals had interpreted attempts at humour as sarcasm. Again, whilst not seeking to minimise their views I have accepted that reality ensures I cannot please everyone, but my best intentions and sincere apologies aid my attempts to be authentic.

#### **6.4.1.3: Breaks**

The second interesting term to emerge from analysis of responses to these questions is a reference to 'breaks'. For the majority of my career I have believed it to be unreasonable to expect children to concentrate for a full hour, lesson after lesson. In 1998 I accepted Smith's (1996) argument regarding attention spans. I used the maxim of chronological age – plus/minus two minutes as a rule of thumb (Smith 2002). Break(s) are mentioned 79 times as a contributory factor in the class climate. Comments recognised the purpose was to change pace, prevent boredom, bring renewed focus, and to simply refresh the children. Pupils were told in advance when the next planned break was scheduled; sometimes I gave a selected pupil the responsibility to gauge when the class needed a break; on occasion I detected they were not ready to settle or focus so inquired of them whether they needed a 30 second break to get the

chatter out of their system. My rationale is succinctly put by a Year 7 girl: *“Mr Warren understands our needs like breaks”* (Y7F210/11M14).

In effect the strategy also allowed me to get ready for the next phase of the lesson, for example, getting technology set up. It enabled me to follow-up on earlier lateness, or have a quiet word with individuals who needed reminding or the offering of a choice to ensure they did themselves justice. Often it was simply a chance to ask how people were feeling and to make contact. Experience has taught me many colleagues will not contemplate the idea of breaks as they are not confident that pupils will re-settle. I found, aside from establishing routines for re-engagement, the ingredients of trust and reasonable negotiation tend to derive from respectful relationships.

Seeking to attain further insight I asked four Year 7 classes:

**Q:** *What signs / clues informed you that it would be in your best interest to behave rather than mess about and disrupt my lessons?* (N: 95).

This question is reminiscent of the earlier question I posed to classes about their perceptions of a ‘strong’ teacher (5.6). However, this version is personalised and enquires about *my* performance. In response there is a (complete) absence of references to authoritarian traits. The contrast is illustrated through the amalgamation of several comments which are again referenced in Appendix B:

“Most teachers will shout ‘come sit down; but Mr Warren was all like ‘please take a seat’; When the teacher gives you the evil eye, Mr Warren will ask you nicely to be quiet; ... some teachers don’t plan a fun lesson but we have a brill lesson; ...because unlike other classes we get breaks in the middle of lessons; I am treated well and always listened to by Mr Warren, but all teachers don’t”.

#### 6.4.1.4: Group monitoring tool

I was particularly interested in examining reasoning which followed the connective ‘because ...’ One theme stood out as significant - it was apparent that many had an acute awareness of the ‘freedom’ they felt privileged to have. In addition, several pupils cited a practical instrument as a tangible cue to amend behaviour. Colour coded in accordance with traffic lights. The tool, pictured below, is usually constructed in a binder to form an A4 sized flip-chart. It monitors whole class collaboration and acts to stimulate peer pressure on individuals who would otherwise stay disconnected with the group tasks.



Figure 6.1

As pupils explain further:

“I knew how to behave because of the count down and the numbers on the different coloured paper; the behaviour/number thing is good; Because [if] you lose points and get to 0 you’d do book work; ... the whole class will suffer; [so] you know not to mess about but have fun and learn”.

Interestingly, I can recall only a couple of occasions during the research process where a group actually lost all 7 points. Often just picking the tool up and wavering whether to turn over the page was enough to deter off-task behaviour. I also observed a particular student who had deliberately squandered the points, appear genuinely taken aback when his peers communicated their disapproval of his play. Over time I considered it ethically sound to deal with a persistent perpetrator separately at an opportune time so not to ‘punish’ the whole class.



#### 6.4.2: Classroom climate questionnaire

To affirm the emphasis I placed on this foundational aspect of group formation I posed two questions: *How do you feel about coming into my classroom;* and, *what advice would you give to a new student who has just joined the school and is accompanying you to my class for the first time?* (N: 354).

Through the questions I wanted to encourage the pupil to build on an emotive response by articulating an objective perspective. An interesting array of terms emerged from the data. Positive descriptors such as *good, happy, calm, excited, relaxed, fine, comfortable,* and *confident* were prominent. The word '*fun*' appeared 202 times. I was mindful this term was absent in descriptions of other teachers they behaved for (see 5.6). I felt validated in making the distinction between '*messing about*' and Rea's (1997) portrayal of '*serious fun*' as integral to learning performance. This is illustrated later in section 6.9.

As my initial focus was on building a positive learning environment, I was interested to explore the context in which 'atmosphere' was phrased. The mention of '*nice / good / peaceful / friendly / calm atmosphere*' gave me encouragement. However, Schutz' (1979) FIRO theory, integral to Temple's Four Model Link-Up, prompted a further inquiry of my groups' inter-relational state.

#### 6.4.3: Secure, significant and valued

The model uses the acronym ICO. 'I' considers to what extent the pupil wants to be/and feels *Included* ('C' considers levels of *Control*, and 'O' relates to degrees of '*Openness*' or *Affection*' and is more personal than 'I'). The theory challenged my assumption that I should make an indiscriminate effort to include everyone in whole class activities. I came to realise that whilst some pupils with high extrovert preferences might desire continued involvement so to feel significant; others, perhaps those who are more introverted, naturally preferred to stand

abreast of developments. Rather than compel pupils to speak, I began to respect individual's level or degree of contribution through creating more choice in how they engaged with others during the learning tasks. This is explained further in section 6.9.

Whilst I did not subject pupils to the intricacies of the theory or expose them to the complications of submitting scores, I did inquire whether the climate I was trying to cultivate equated to them feeling significant and valued or liked. The relevance of this is explained in Footnote 6 (see p.207). These aspects were investigated through administering questionnaires to four Year 7 classes in July 2011. Expanding the scope of my original questionnaire, they considered:

- Do you feel safe?
- Do you feel as though you belong and are welcomed?
- Do you feel as though you are treated well and valued in my class?

Data analysis revealed 287 references to 'yes' which were then qualified. A further inquiry produced zero returns for the word 'no' as part of any of the responses to the three questions from the 106 participants.

The data presented so far suggests I was largely effective in establishing a solid foundation for my classes as I sought to inquire **whether non-authoritarian teacher approaches can steer pupils to contribute towards a well-ordered class dynamic**. General affirmation is illustrated through comments such as: *"[I behaved] Because I liked you; You just take care of us and stuff"; "As you don't shout or be mean so I don't have any reason to be naughty or nasty"*.

On the whole I can claim that paying attention to how the groups formed at the beginning of the course, and periodically in subsequent meetings, ensured the majority of classes passed effortlessly through the 'Storming' stage and settled or normalised. Forsyth (1983) characterised this latter developmental stage as class members sharing a feeling of group unity

so exhibiting a sense of cohesiveness. However, this is not to suggest all pupils experienced my lessons positively. Some comments alerted me to aspects which were not initially apparent to me when teaching. There was evidence that some children, although feeling uncomfortable to some degree, managed to cope so not to upset the class equilibrium. Consequently, their sense of incongruence also escaped my attention.

For example, some participants amongst the 14 classes made the clear distinction between the subject and the teacher, a Y10 pupil stated: *"I do not enjoy RE but I do like Mr Warren as a teacher"*, whilst his peer said: *"Its fine, but I prefer Mr Warren rather than RE. He has made it a good subject but normally I don't like RE. I used to dread it last year"*. The theme is reinforced by a Y7 boy: *"I don't really like RE but it has grown on me"*.

Furthermore, despite my efforts to create a positive foundation within my classes and to focus on noticing and appreciating pupils (especially those who are usually quiet), one Y7 wrote (emphasis added):

*"I feel ok, but I don't know too many people who make me feel uncomfortable but I don't mind really because Mr Warren makes it funny. But I don't think Mr Warren really knows me"* (7MON3F8).

Another answer reminded me of the vulnerability some children feel as they come from one cohort to join another. *"I feel scared... Sometimes; Yes [I feel welcomed and valued] by the teacher, but not by pupils"*. The insights reinforced for me the fact that on an hourly basis pupils are required to navigate their place amongst peers and the adult needs to be ever vigilant. A different comment left me confused as a Y7 girl wrote: *"[pupils behave] because when you are angry and cross you are scary"*. This is contrary to my own account which documents I did not, on any occasion shout during the period I taught this cohort.

In addition although the questions generating a broad range of affirmative responses, drawing comments such as *"You are a calm person which sets an example to others"* (7MON3F8), the data also produced negative judgemental remarks such as *boring* and *strict*. Qualifying the phrase 'ok', older pupils in particular, openly revealed their indifference. Dismissive of my attempts to improve his experience of my subject, this is perhaps best captured by the response: *"Fine, like any other lesson, just plain simple school"*.

Contrary to the majority of replies, my research reminds of the reality that typical classes are likely to contain some individuals who, despite the teacher's best efforts, are reluctant to be won over. Standing out as exemplars, three Y9 boys from the same class wrote: *"I do not look forward to sir's lessons and I dislike the method of teaching"*; *"Getting ready to be bored"*; *"Bored and thinking 'oh no'"*; whilst a Y10 girl offered a different interpretation of 'fun' saying: *"Don't really look forward to it, find the lesson boring and not too keen on stupid jokes every lesson"*.

From an initial surge of being uncomfortable with such comments I eventually came to a place of acceptance. This represented a small release from a rigid, controlling mind-set – there was a growing sense of realism to my perspective. For these individuals - they may have equated their experience of the subject with negative feelings towards me. As I was unaware of such opinions during the course of lessons, and it was unrepresentative of their groups' collective appraisal, I suspect a façade of politeness or passive defensiveness may well have existed if the respondents sat with peers who they did not relate to or shared their view. This is the essence of WC (White Cloud) behaviour which is likely to be seen as unproblematic if it masquerades under the veneer of order. Breidenstein (2007) defined boredom with being detached. The three Year 9 boys cited were of particular interest to me and are scrutinized further in (6.9). My research notes also detailed sustained periods of active opposition. These invited intense scrutiny during the research period and are viewed through the lens of Transactional Analysis.

## 6.5: Transactional Analysis (TA)

The TA model provides a theoretical structure from which to analyse both positive and negative interactions portrayed throughout this thesis. It also signals a change in emphasis within this chapter as I infuse data with further ontological coverage so to chart interactions with significant individual students. The focus enabled me to present and explore the person behind the professional the pupils encountered and commented on. At this point I merely offer a brief background of the model and key definitions. These lay a structural foundation for when I refer to TA periodically in the coming sections. There I engage with Karpman's (1968) Drama Triangle, and Temple's (2002b) development of TA as a self-awareness tool. These helped to analyse patterns of behaviour, and through reflexive scrutiny detailed how I made sense of more testing episodes within the research. Lerkkanen & Temple's (2004) study of student teachers emphasised personal development underpins professional effectiveness. My study endorses this for serving teachers.

Freud's (1923/1961) psychoanalytical theory of self, advanced the notion of ego identity to denote underlying processes which suggest consistency of self across situations and over time (Schwartz & Pantin 2006). Drawing on wide and diverse ideas, Eric Berne (1965) built on Freud's ideas of ego (Tilney 2000) in his construction of Transactional Analysis. TA is a theory of personality and social psychology within the humanistic tradition (Barrow et al. 2002). The structural model (below) offers a theory of personality through the first order diagram which shows sets of 'ego states' or related feelings, thoughts and behaviours:

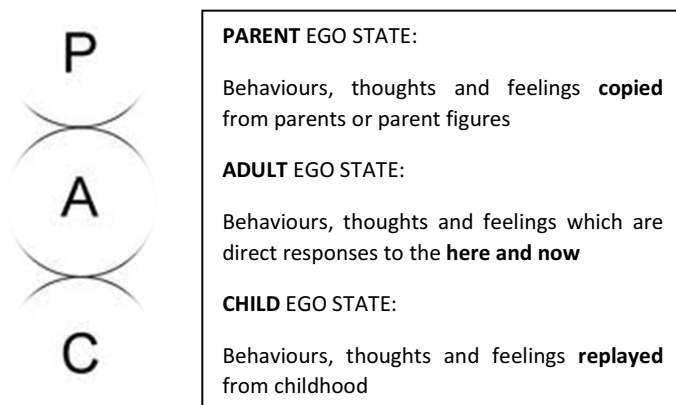


Diagram 6.5

The ego states are written with capital initial letters to distinguish them from the descriptors of people as parents, adults and children. It is noted for clarity that ‘Parent’ is not confined to family members; it is inclusive of relationships with significant grown-ups / authority figures in the past. Likewise ‘Child’ (C) refers to the subjective aspect of one’s experience of the past. The relevance of the sub-categories of Parent (P) and Child on my formative years and subsequent performance as a teacher are considered later in section 6.7.2. In my career, much of my communication, or transactions prior to this study, derived from the negative or ‘*critical*’ aspect of Parent control (Illsley-Clarke 1978) and was aimed at the subordinate Child so to reinforce institutional roles. Later in 6.7 and in Appendix 6A, Temple (2002a) uses the term ‘*dominating*’ and proceeds to advance the positive attributes of Parent as appropriate for an adult in charge of minors. As explained in Chapters One and Four, the vast majority of pupils responded to my stringent approach by being compliant, whilst a minority reacted through ‘rebellious’ Child. According to Temple (2002a) (Appendix 6A) both of these expressions come through socialisation as children learn to cope with demands they find difficult. In TA this complementary exchange is expressed as:

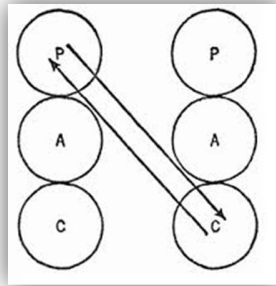


Diagram 6.6

Barrow et al. (2002) suggested Parent and Child modes are drawn to each other like magnets and can go on indefinitely. This is referred to as the “first rule of communication” (Tudor 2002: p.22). This habitual interchange resonates with my enactment of an authoritarian role which tended to induce pupil conformity, and is reminiscent of the relationships described by students in 5.6. Tilney (1998: p.128) defined: “A complementary transaction is one in which the vectors run parallel, indicating consensus about who should be in which ego state”.

Alternatively, and essential for meeting the aim of this study, functioning from ‘Adult’ (A) represents one’s capacity to evaluate ‘reality’ and to be objective and take account of feelings, thoughts, and events in the *here and now*. It is from this state I hoped to build classroom relationships during the Action Research phase. For me, ‘Adult’ is considered integral to choosing the appropriate ‘attire’ in response to variable ‘weather conditions’. The intention is to elicit a reciprocal response from the pupil. Thus far I can claim much of my data indicates complementary positive exchanges between me and the majority of my pupils. This specific transaction is expressed in TA terms (below).

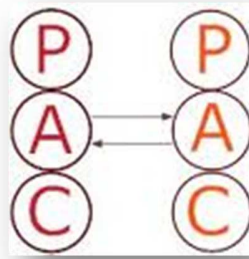


Diagram 6.7

As TA's philosophical assumption is that all people are 'OK' and deserving of respect, a person's degree of congruence with this stance might be dependent on past events derived from one's 'Life-script' (Barrow et al. 2002). This concept suggests pivotal beliefs I have long held about my place in the world could conceivably colour my interpretations of contemporary events and stoke reactions in me to undermine my intentions to act democratically and ethically. Traits attributed to my life-script are presented in section 6.7.2 – 6.7.6. This aspect of TA seemed particularly pertinent on occasions when my authority was challenged and control became an area for contestation. In metaphoric language, it provided a compass as I sought to navigate my way through 'stormy weather'.

## 6.6: 'Storming'

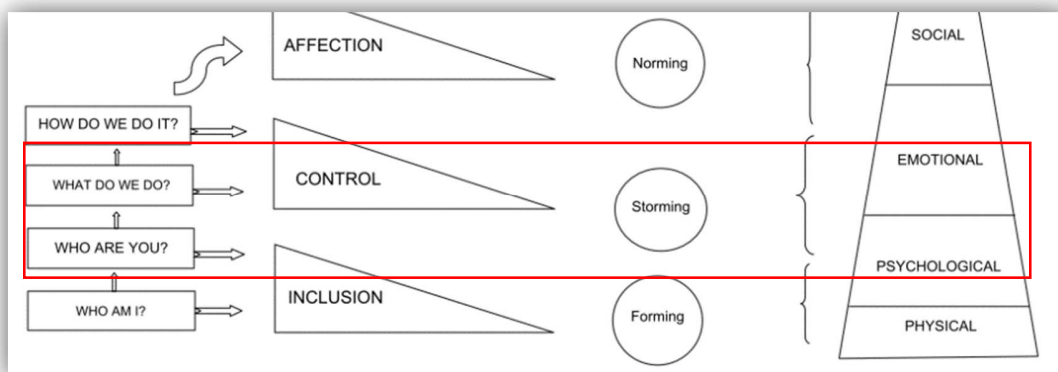


Diagram 6.8



Whilst I can argue consistent progression from the 'Forming' stage to the 'Norming' stage for the majority of classes (6.3-6.4), three obstacles impeding my work became apparent. I will deal with the first two here. The third, concerned with the experience of pedagogy as overly prescriptive rather than as a complex flow of interactions, is considered later in section 6.9. The first hindrance was contestation with significant Dark Cloud behaviour within two specific groups. The on-going incidents ensured their classes witnessed a prolonging of the 'Storming' stage (Diagram 6.8 above).

The second potential obstacle was related to my ability to deal with these contestations which provoked an overwhelming inclination for me to revert to domineering 'quick-fix' strategies. The subsequent reflexive process which sought to overcome deep-seated traits is documented later. The ensuing focus might be summarised as a study of pupil provocation eliciting an external professional response, whilst at the same time stoking engrained defensive reactions which I fought to contain. In TA terms these episodes will serve as examples of 'crossed transactions' (explained further in Diagrams 6.11a/b below). This aspect of my performance uses two values to act as standards of judgement. Firstly, *fairness* is advanced to assess my authoritative response to students; secondly, the notion of *responsibility* guides the decisions I made especially during critical moments of contestation (6.6.2 & 6.6.3).

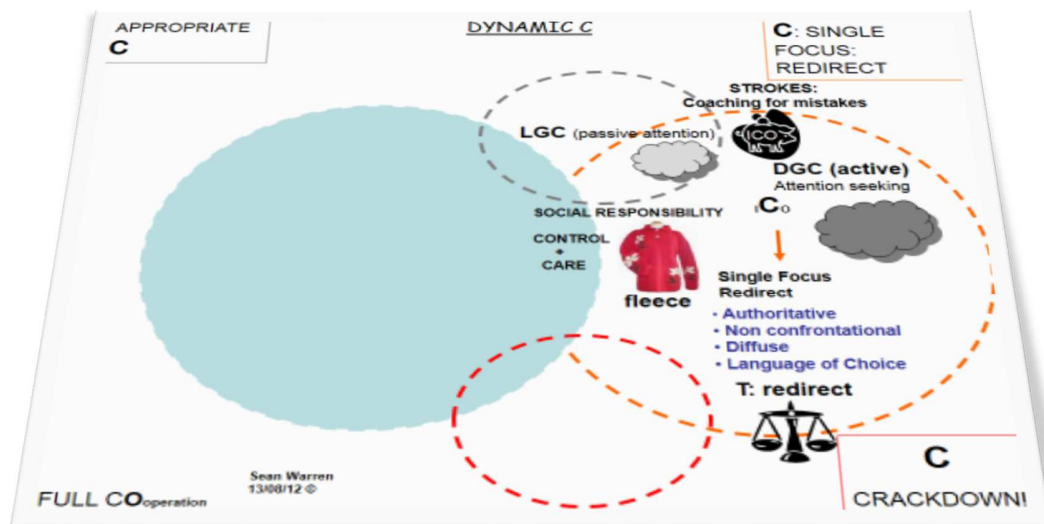


Diagram 6.9

### 6.6.1: Dark Clouds' hidden goals

This broad obstructive category is defined by behaviour termed Grey Cloud (GC) and Rain Cloud (RC). The considered response to Grey Cloud is to pull on a 'fleece' (Diagram 6.9 above) in order to keep internal and external equilibrium within a changeable climate. Adorning this 'garment' I aimed to re-direct pupils back to task in a non-confrontational manner. For the majority, the use of techniques espoused by Rogers (2002) were enough to desist and return them to their learning. In accordance with descriptors presented in Chapter Five, Grey Cloud behaviour is equated to attention seeking needs and is usually dependent on approval from peers. As such I found if the class norm was task orientated, such incidents were fleeting. Cumulative quotes from students ranging from Y7 to Y10 (emphasis added / references in Appendix 6B) indicate their awareness of boundaries:

"If I get a bit out of **line** [you] talk to me and then I am ok; We know you don't stand for nonsense, and we know when to draw the **line** because without shouting you present

warnings; ... you are caring and funny but you put people who cross the **line** in their place; I think you just set the rules so we know where we stand. Also you respect us and we can have a laugh with you but we also know when not to cross the **line**".

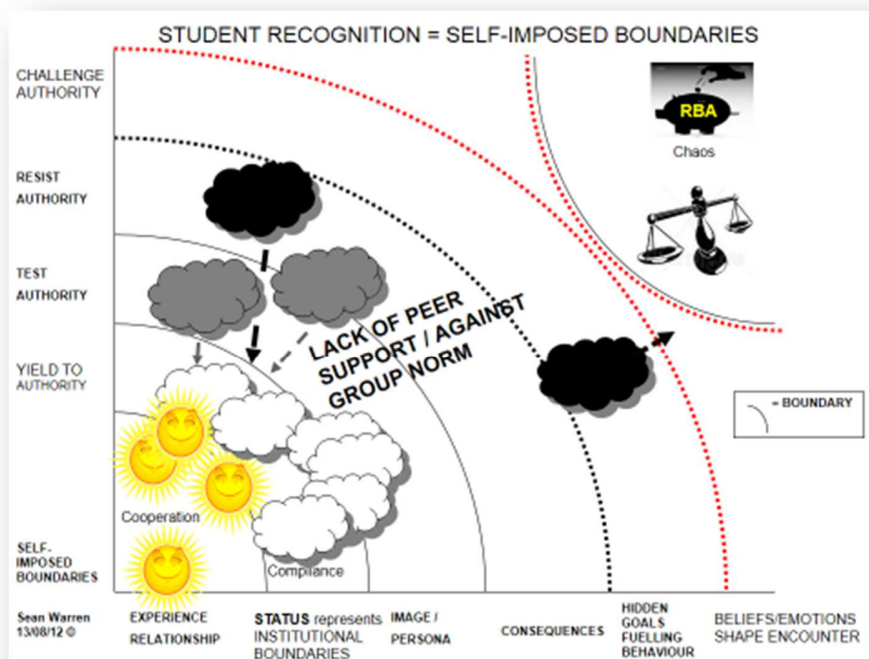


Diagram 6.10

However, as illustrated above in Diagram 6.10, during my research phase I encountered some pupils who deliberately pushed boundaries, rejected the group norm and chose to 'cross the line'. Teacher/pupil encounters at these central borders have the capacity to escalate, drawing in observers to progressively impinge on productive behaviour and learning opportunities as depicted in Diagrams 5.24 and 6.25. Dreikur (2004) was helpful in distinguishing between Grey Clouds, and the hidden goals I attribute to Rain Cloud conduct. With Rain Cloud, wilful behaviour is fuelled by 'misguided power'. There is evidence of this strand in the detention data shown in Chapter Five. The conflicts can be pre-determined and may be accompanied by heightened emotion (Maslow 1950). I would need to distinguish between behaviours deriving

from the will, and fearful and emotional responses which stem from the 'lower brain' (Siegel 2014). Goleman (1996) drew on neurological data to advance the notion of emotional hijacking as explanatory for seemingly irrational reactions. Sunderland (2006) advocated the need for adults to get close to children experiencing distress tantrums. Acting as a container they demonstrate that the emotional state is survivable so to assist the child to develop self-soothing and regulation. However, the idea that some incidents might be contrived was interesting and would require the teacher to demonstrate heightened awareness alongside a dignified disciplinary approach. Berne (1964: p.23) referred to these destructive patterns of communication between pupil and teacher as 'games'. These are defined as "an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome".

To illustrate these complex, and uncomfortable exchanges I initially select two data sources to present the critical moments of my research. Firstly, an obstinate Year 8 *girl* who became increasingly non responsive to re-direction strategies, and secondly my dealings with the deliberate ploys of a Year 10 female *sub-group*. Later, I briefly relay my dealings with an established *class* I inherited half way through the year who collectively challenged boundaries. The current episodes depict my descriptive account of events and provide context for my reflexive grappling and attempts to stay consistent with the values identified as standards of judgement. The incidents below, suggested a deeper level of antagonism was apparent within the motive behind the child's conduct. As such a fleece quickly becomes inadequate as reason becomes subordinate.

Demonstrative of my new found restraint, I refer briefly to my former reaction to similar provocation, recorded near the start of my research on Mon 19/01/09. It is significant as it represents the last time I shouted at a pupil.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> I record I strategically raised my voice on Thursday 7 Oct 2010 in response to two Y7 boys play fighting, pushing, kicking and tripping oblivious to anyone else in the room. This single event may account for the anomaly comment cited in 6.4.3.

“Y10 MB tried his luck very early on... gave him a truth tablet, showed him the reality of taking on an adult in a power struggle. Slammed my fist on his desk and shouted for the world to hear that he was giving it the ‘bigger’ but couldn't fight for toffee and was no more than a three foot gangster. This took the wind out of his sails and got the attention of the watching class”.

### **6.6.2: Rain Cloud**

The first analysis involves a female in Y8. My research diary shows I recorded nearly ten thousand words to document our on-going dispute over the course of a school year. I will offer selective entries to illustrate the nature of conflict and my operational responses. These are presented in Appendix 6C which document my attempts to use re-direction techniques. The methods are indicated in the script through italics. Although I maintain the weather categories refer to specific behaviours rather than a label for a person, I take poetic licence to intermittently refer to the focus child as RC so to identify her with the traits she habitually displayed.

Aside from the practical and strategic approaches, I also alluded to brief instances of internal turmoil but will not expand on how these were addressed until after I present the second exemplar of contestation (6.6.3). The coverage of these incidents adds a perspective and insight to the 4061 incidents which resulted in short descriptive statements qualifying detentions (see 5.5.3).

This episode demonstrated a clear breakdown in communication. The second rule of communication denotes one of the participants crosses the transaction by responding from a different ego state. As I sought to stimulate conversation from Adult, RC responded through, in TA terms, ‘Rebellious’ Child. The crossed transaction is transparent (Diagram 6.11a). The stimuli attracted an overt reaction. In these instances there was no requirement for me to ‘decode’ psychological meanings subtly embedded in body language, facial expressions or tone of voice

(illustrated by simultaneous dotted and solid lines indicating a 'split' transaction in Diagram 6.11b) as I instantly recognised the goal as power.

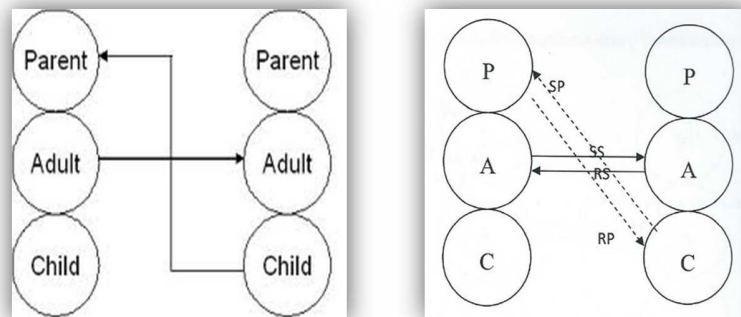


Diagram 6.11a/b<sup>9</sup>

Essentially professional throughout, I found myself up against a wilful, defiant girl. Wearing 'waterproofs' (below) involved a decision not to be drawn into struggles which aimed to extract the child's agreement. Dyer (2005) argued, in such instances, the best thing we can do for a child is not to compromise, barter or plead but to show a boundary means 'no'; that the child is responsible for his/her own conduct, once reasonable means of negotiation have been exhausted and they have reached designated limits. Dell (1982: p.11) reminded, according to systems theory (an approach related to the study of complexity) it is "ontologically impossible" to actually force compliance.

<sup>9</sup> The formal definition of a transaction is a transactional stimulus (S) plus a transactional response (R) (Berne 1961). These diagrams show a 'crossed transaction' in which a reasonable request is met with a contrary response (left); and, an 'ulterior transaction' (right) which illustrates a person's underlying tone or gestures belie the façade of 'Adult' transaction. In retrospect this was perhaps evident amongst the three bored boys mentioned in 6.4.3. TA assumes that the underlying psychological communication will always dominate outcome.

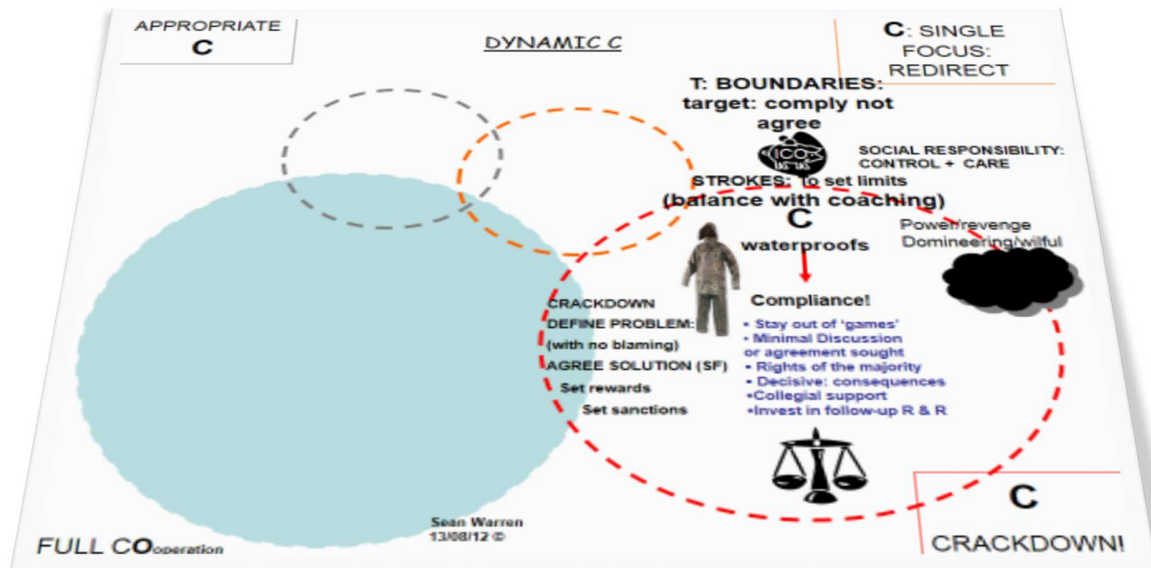


Diagram 6.12

The process of negotiation I necessitated is summarised from subsequent Field notes which detailed my extensive efforts to make things 'right' – as symbolised in the diagram, to put 'money back in the 'Relational Bank Account' and 're-balance the scales'. Arranging a reconciliation meeting so to 'repair and rebuild' (R & R Diagram 6.12), apologising for my initial 'mistake' of embarrassing her in front of her peers, correcting her view that I 'hated' her, 'agreeing' targets, organising temporary alternative provision with colleagues ... were met with a range of creative reasons to be late/absent and sustain strategies to deliberately disrupt the lesson. I became aware at one stage in a lesson that I felt uncomfortable. Bizarrely I found myself being over-accommodating. I was fearful of correcting her, so negating the inroads of a fresh start. I saw small glimpses that my reasonableness was being perceived as weakness as she pushed and tested boundaries (shouting out answers, pulling and pushing the boy next to her).

The situation, and more specifically the school's strategic response felt heavily compromised by the child's status as a gypsy traveller. Extensive work with external agencies filled a file which seemed remarkably devoid of sanctions. Two colleagues who had carried out their duties according to reason and policy, had found themselves confronted by her aggressive mother whilst each was in the process of teaching another class. I did not encounter this. I attribute this to RC's older brother being an advocate of mine within their home (I later learned). After experiencing a verbal attack from RC whilst intervening on behalf of a child who was being subjected to her abuse during a lunchtime, I insisted to the Deputy Head that measures would have to be taken to re-assert my authority. I deemed this essential if I was to be able to fulfil future obligations to address such incidents on behalf of the school. This failed to happen despite my best efforts and so I felt compromised. Early in the new academic year, I was again in an area where RC was swearing loudly. For the first, and only time in my career, I looked the other way and carried on walking.

### **6.6.3: Y10 Sub-group**

Concurrently, my conviction to find a 'better' way was being sorely tested by a Y10 sub-group. Again I refer directly to my Field notes and expand to capture the inner struggles which dominated my reflexive thoughts during this period. After initially calm and constructive lessons, all changed. Using selective notes from my research diary blog, the period from September to October 2009 is documented in Appendix 6D<sup>10</sup>.

To illustrate the extent of the problem I was habitually facing I conducted a random tally chart to capture the interactions of the cited lesson at the end of Appendix 6D. Of 18 disturbances recorded within the hour, 16 (89%) emanated from the sub-group.

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<sup>10</sup> Appendix 6D provides a rationale for the abbreviations used in Diagram 6.13 and text in 6.6.3.



### Y10 TUES P5 13/10/09 LOW LEVEL DISTRACTIONS

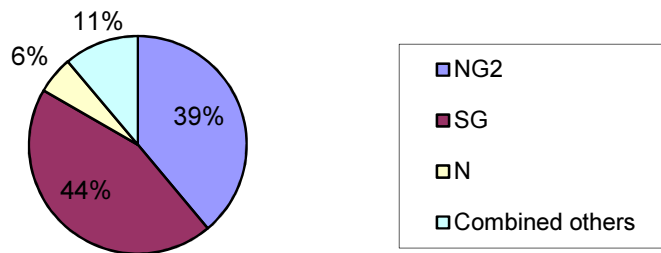


Diagram 6.13

As a researcher I found the task wearing. The exercise acted to remind me of the frustration level a teacher may feel when they are emotionally attached to such an experience rather than operating as a participant researcher. Whilst an interesting exercise to practise constraint, of course my role was not constrained to that of an 'objective' observer. Afterwards it seemed to me that somehow the girls had 'got one over me'. The prospect of going through it all again for the rest of the year would drain me of energy and I feared would lead to me reverting to defensive mechanisms. Indeed, the lesson I refer to in Diagram 6.13 (above) prompted me to ponder over and over the implications of such a situation as I lay awake from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. Despite the Christmas break, extracts from my Research Diary show that there was no sign of the challenging behaviour abating upon commencement of lessons in January. I choose to present the interaction as I initially recorded it in my notes, rather than submit individual extracts. I argue single phrases would disrupt the dynamic and detract from sense of escalation which was inherent within the social exchange. Again, efforts to re-direct by adorning a 'fleece' are recorded in italics within brackets:

12/01/10:

“First lesson back after the holidays and snow.

Was in a decent frame of mind but felt a pervading heaviness as this lesson drew nearer. Recognised it as ridiculous but it was there nonetheless.

Group came in and began getting themselves organised. Routines working well. I noted NG2's arrival (it occurred to me that I was particularly aware of her entry as I was conscious of inner relief I experienced previously when realising that any of the three were absent).

N arrived with a frown and a strut and immediately made her way to NG2. I observed from afar.

SG arrived late. *Resisting the temptation to ask 'why'* I said quietly: “I'll see you at the end to find out your reason for being late”.

“I'm not late”, she stated. *I didn't allow myself to get drawn in to the accompanying attitude (secondary behaviour).*

The lesson got underway and the majority were ready to be engaged. Surveying the room for positives to comment on I noticed only three students had left their bags on the table.

Matter of fact, “N (*pause / eye contact*) sort your bag”.

It was simply pushed across to the other part of the table. “N, bag”. A tut greeted a heavy handed removal of the offending item.

..."SG bag, thanks".

..."NG2, bag off the table".

All had made a start except three!

"N you have not started" (*describing the obvious*).

"I haven't got a pen"

"Here you go".

No thanks forthcoming.

Playing along for a moment – "SG you have your book closed"

"I haven't got a pen"

"There you go".

..."NG2 do you need any help?"

Ignored but then a pronounced effort and sigh mascaaed as a response.

..."SG you are looking at your phone under the desk. Put it away or on my desk. C1"  
(*choice /take up time & standard sanction consequence*).

N piped up "I can't do this"

I patiently reminded her of printed directions and example available to her.

...SG wined "Why can't I move seats?" No response from me.

The rest of the class continued to ignore the tactics.

SG closed her book.

“SG are you refusing to attempt the task?”

“Not doing it”.

“Fine C2, *timeout*. Out you go”.

N turned around to offer her laughing, mocking contribution to the situation. I mimicked her to suppress an overwhelming desire to put her in her place.

This stirred NG2 up. “You always do that. You are to blame for winding us up. You do my head in”.

“Yeh”, joined in N

(my head was screaming shut your poxy mouth!)

“Really”, I said”.

#### **6.6.3.1: Analysis of Games**

Berne (1964) conceptualised unhealthy communication as descending into psychological games. Karpman (1968) presented the exchange through Drama Triangle. The negative expression is shown in background pink, with the top two terms representative of negative Parent expressions of control and care. These are explained further in Appendix 6A. Their depiction in situations such as that outlined above instigates an obscured formula: Con + Gimmick = Response-Switch-Cross-up-Pay-off (C + G = R-S-CU-PO) which aims to draw the teacher out of Adult. To illustrate I analysed my diary extract (above) retrospectively.

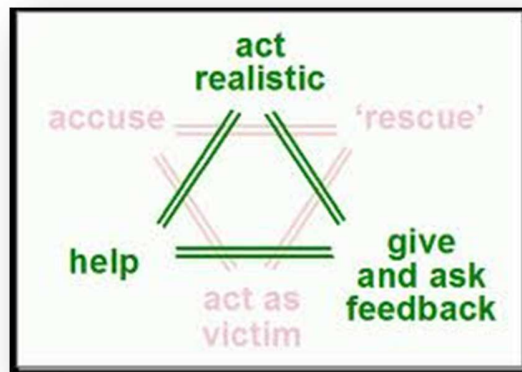


Diagram 6.14

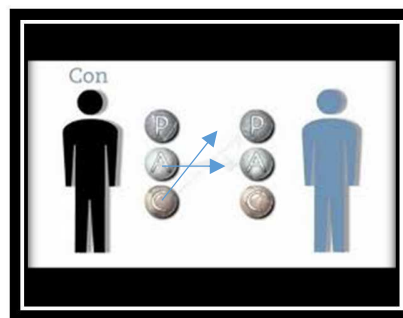


Diagram 6.15

The 'game', begins with a 'con' or 'invitation' in the form of a split transaction from the pupil – there is an ulterior motive behind the actions witnessed. 6.6.3 showed the statement which declared 'I haven't got a pen' was a ploy to stoke a reaction. Although the information might initially appear to be reasonable, it derived from 'resistant' Child. The claim was encased in body language and tone to alert me of a ploy.

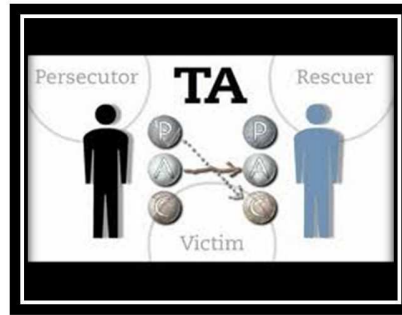


Diagram 6.16

'Players' can enter the 'game' in any role, on this occasion the three collaborated to adopt the position of passive 'Persecutor' (on the top left background) seeking to draw me in by provoking me to correct them. This would have enabled them to *switch* to another position so to perpetuate the exchange.

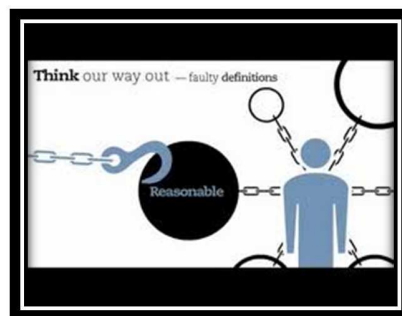


Diagram 6.17

The 'game' can only proceed if I get 'hooked in', if my 'gimmicks' compel me to react. Gimmicks refer to a psychological need which the initiator(s) of the 'game' can exploit; they act as a target for the perpetrator(s). These needs are expressed through absolute terms, 'I must...', or 'I must be seen to be... reasonable'. In my case my long established 'hooks' come in the form of control; ... I must be 'strong' (or more accurately, I must not be seen to be weak); and I must be 'perfect' (or more accurately, I cannot be seen to be less than 'outstanding'). The 'games' which engage participants are usually repetitive, are largely outside of 'Adult' awareness (Stewart &

Jones 1987) and originate in childhood. The origins of my core gimmicks are considered shortly in 6.7.2.

On this occasion I was not drawn into the game so was afforded the opportunity to reflect on the ploys used. The girls, looking for a response or more accurately a reaction, sought to outmanoeuvre the operational stance I had taken. Subsequent ruses indicate a switch to 'Victim' inviting me to either administer blame from a 'Persecutor' position, or to 'Rescue' by pandering to their needs and over-servicing, so not to stir them up and allowing me to get on with the lesson (Karpman 1968). As I resisted getting entwined in the 'game' by responding through an Adult professional 'fleece', SG switched back to passive 'Persecutor' moving from 'Victim' *'can't do it as I haven't got a pen'* to *'not doing it'*. My momentary slip when mimicking revealed an ulterior transaction which was constant beneath my professional mask, signifying my slipping out of Adult (see Diagram 6.11b). This prompted the girls to instantly change tactics, switching to blame me for the issue and portraying themselves as 'Victims' of a 'Persecutor'. Had I got further drawn in to justify myself, the 'game' would likely to have progressed to a 'Cross-up' and 'Pay-off'. Hence, if I had been unaware of the 'game' Karpman (1968) suggested I would have experienced a moment of disorientation or unease where I come to realise I had 'somehow been had'. The 'Pay-off' refers to the instigators, having enhanced their script and life position, feeling smug and superior whilst the teacher feels deskilled and foolish.

Although I consciously read the situation well, later my sub-conscious proceeded to champion the validity of my 'gimmicks' and objected at some level to my constraint. This resulted in me retrospectively experiencing the 'Cross-up'. I used my research diary blog to capture the essence of my turbulent thoughts upon waking:

#### 6.6.4: Reflexive turmoil

*"I awoke in the early hours and found myself caught up in a familiar struggle. The incessant replay of the previous day's events encourage me to repeat the confrontations but each time I visualise a self-righteous retort which feels intensely justified. Thoughts which accompany the images tolerate accusations: 'surely it's a weakness, not a strength to abandon shouting. I bet getting angry would have put SG / NG2 in their place. They wouldn't have messed with the man I once was'. In my slumber I felt impotent. I felt my self-control made me look feeble in the eyes of those who continue to disturb me. Conversely I could sense the 'RCs' stand as they revelled in the stronghold of their defiance, their indifference, which derived from their collective will, furnished by periodic displays of emotion. I am fully aware I cannot win if I follow them onto that chosen battleground. I want consequences. In my tiredness I am convinced I want to cheat and win back territory by imposing my will.*

*How can I rebalance?*

*'They can't control me unless I let them'. Yes, I have said that phrase to scores of colleagues over the years. I deliberately relax my muscles, aware of how physically tense I am. I am stirred to the very core of my being. Whilst the school lies empty I lay reliving the past whilst framing the future trying to understand that which strips the present of all peace in the dead of the night.*

*The value which I identified as a standard of judgement in these critical moments is that of responsibility. That I would be responsible for my actions. In the midst of critical moments, and during fretful sleep, these isolated episodes disproportionate though they are, continue to skew perspective. Through acquired skills and a commitment to the study's values, my exterior conceals the inner turmoil I experience in the second year of research".*



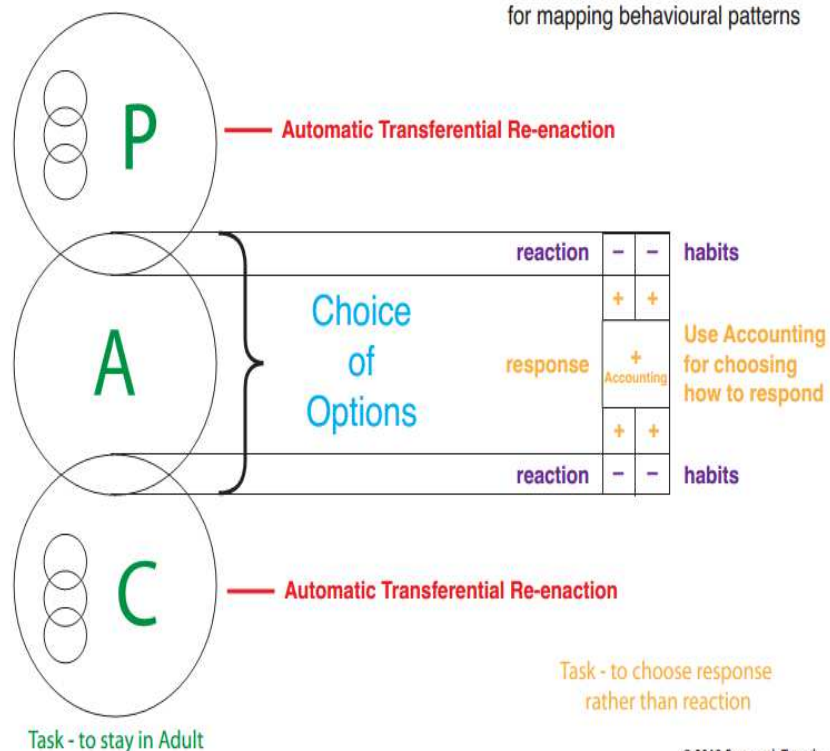
Dewey (1934: p.18) counselled “only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive”. I was about to conceive how the notion of ‘presence’ might contribute to my desire to be authentic and more trusting, whilst continuing to necessitate the requirement for me to be an effective authority figure.

### **6.7: Functional Fluency**

Later that year (2010), a sense of congruity began to emerge through engagement with Temple’s Functional Fluency model (2002a) (FF). It advocated personal development should underpin the professional effectiveness for educators (2005). For the first time I was able to illuminate the possible origins of the ‘cons’ I initiated, and the ‘gimmicks’ which hooked me into power games in the classroom. The theoretical basis for the FF model is found within the TA structure, and is illustrated through a miniature outline framework, below right (Temple 2012a):

**Integrating Adult Model of Ego States**  
for mapping transference

**Functional Fluency Model**  
of  
Human Social Behaviour  
for mapping behavioural patterns



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Diagram 6.18

The FF model is expanded and qualified in Diagram 6.19 (below), and further detailed in (Appendix 6A). It provided a behavioural diagnosis for ego states, of which I had at that point, only a rudimentary understanding. The unseen base for the second and third levels shown below, represent categories of human functioning. From bottom to top, illuminating 'Child', 'Adult', & 'Parent', they refer to growing up (self-actualisation); survival (reality assessment); and, significantly for my primary area of interest, being in charge (positions of social responsibility). These broad areas of social functioning indicate how we use energy on our own behalf, for staying in contact with current reality, and on behalf of others (Temple 2004). These provide the foundation for five value free elements in Level Two, which are indicated in the white boxes below.

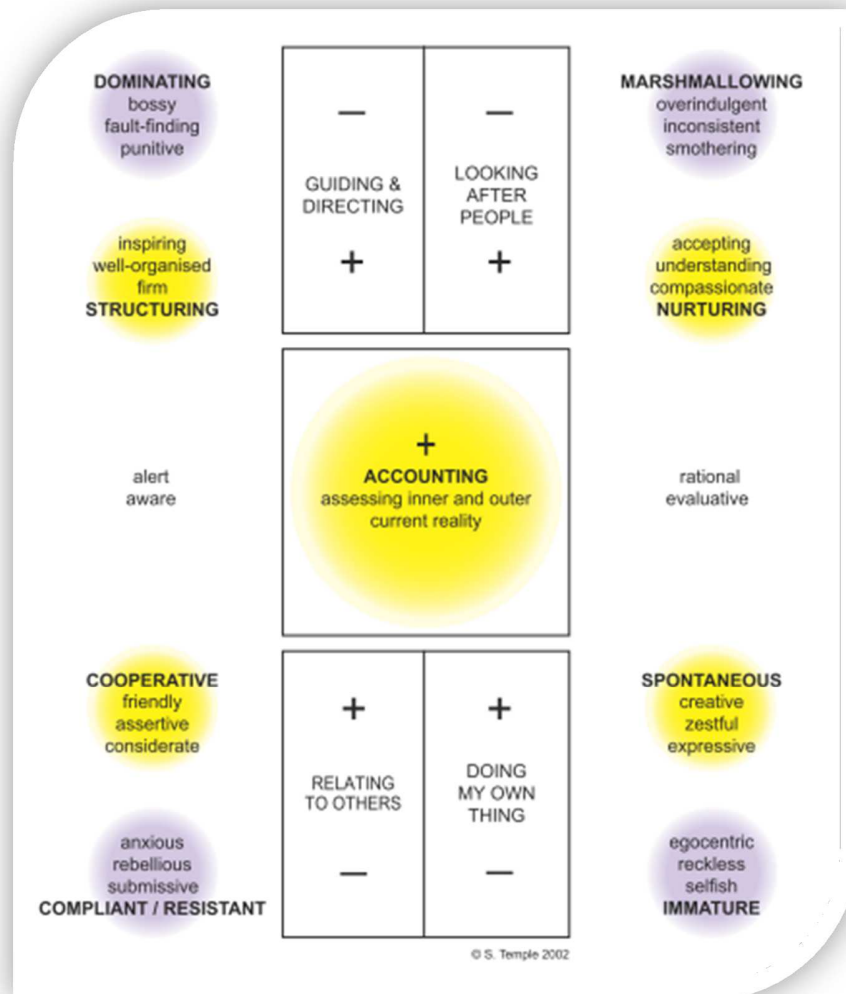


Diagram 6.19

Level Three of the model shows the corner elements each have positive and negative modes of behaviour. In all there are five positive modes (gold), four of which are self-actualising behavioural modes which show effective ways of using the elements (Temple 2008), or of functioning in the *here and now* from Adult. 'Accounting' is different from the other elements. It denotes internal energy and is integral to using behaviour modes effectively so we, and others benefit. It denotes the 'essence of presence': the capacity to assess current reality. Associated with 'with-it-ness', 'Accounting' invites a quantitative query asking if there is a deficit or access in internal processing. Either is counter-productive – too little might result in

unrealistic actions due to lack of consideration, whilst too much is likely to result in procrastination. Each of these internal states might contribute to an inquiry of the Trainee Teachers' performances featured in 5.10 & 5.10.1.

The negative behaviour modes are highlighted in purple and indicate "old [out of date] teachings and old learnings" (Temple 2008: p.7). These correspond to the overlapping segments in Diagram 6.18 (above) are referred to as contaminated modes. They have the propensity to cause a person to *react* (rather than *respond* though 'Accounting' mode in 'Adult'). Temple (2008) considered these traits to be a natural part of human nature. However, the frequency and intensity of some contaminations suggest aspects of previous experience, which have yet to be fully assimilated, into 'Adult'<sup>11</sup> cause a person to *re-enact*. The 'Adult' can become subordinate as unresolved issues can trigger reactions in the here and now as if to archaic events (Paul & Epanchin 1991). Exploration of this line of reflexive inquiry draws on Berne's development of Freud's ideas on transference (Temple 2002a). Weiss (2002) pointed out the professional literature had given minimal consideration to the importance of transference for understanding classroom dynamics.

Whilst I concentrate on detailing past experiences and relationships which I argue provoked defensive reactions in me, during the early days of my research I became acutely aware of the validity of this notion of regression. On one occasion, I interpreted continued provocation from a defiant boy as an attempt to bully me. This triggered an irrational re-enactment in which I 'flipped' and actively 'stood up' to this perceived bully. I later traced my re-action back to the re-playing of an incident documented in 6.7.3 in which I was a helpless victim. My reaction was demonstrative of a subsequent conviction I document in 6.7.6. Exploration of how negative aspects of my contemporary behaviour might find their origins in my past came through analysis of a TIFF (Temple Index of Functional Fluency). This was done firstly through a two hour consultation with Dr Susannah Temple, and subsequently, through reflexive thought asking what is in my ego state structure and what made it?

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<sup>11</sup> Temple (2007) refers to 'integrating' rather than 'integrated' Adult to denote the process is constant, lifelong and dynamic.

### **6.7.1: TIFF profile**

Diagram 6.20 (below) represents an individual TIFF psychometric profile which invites an analysis of how the model might inform my practice. The results are derived from an online questionnaire which pose 108 hypothetical questions. Each question invited an answer, or the most likely answer. The size of the respective circles are consistent with the numbers they host. The tool aims to initially provide a snapshot of the balance of energy between the modes, so to probe how I might enhance my effective use of energy (thus minimising ineffective use of energy) in my relationships and communication.

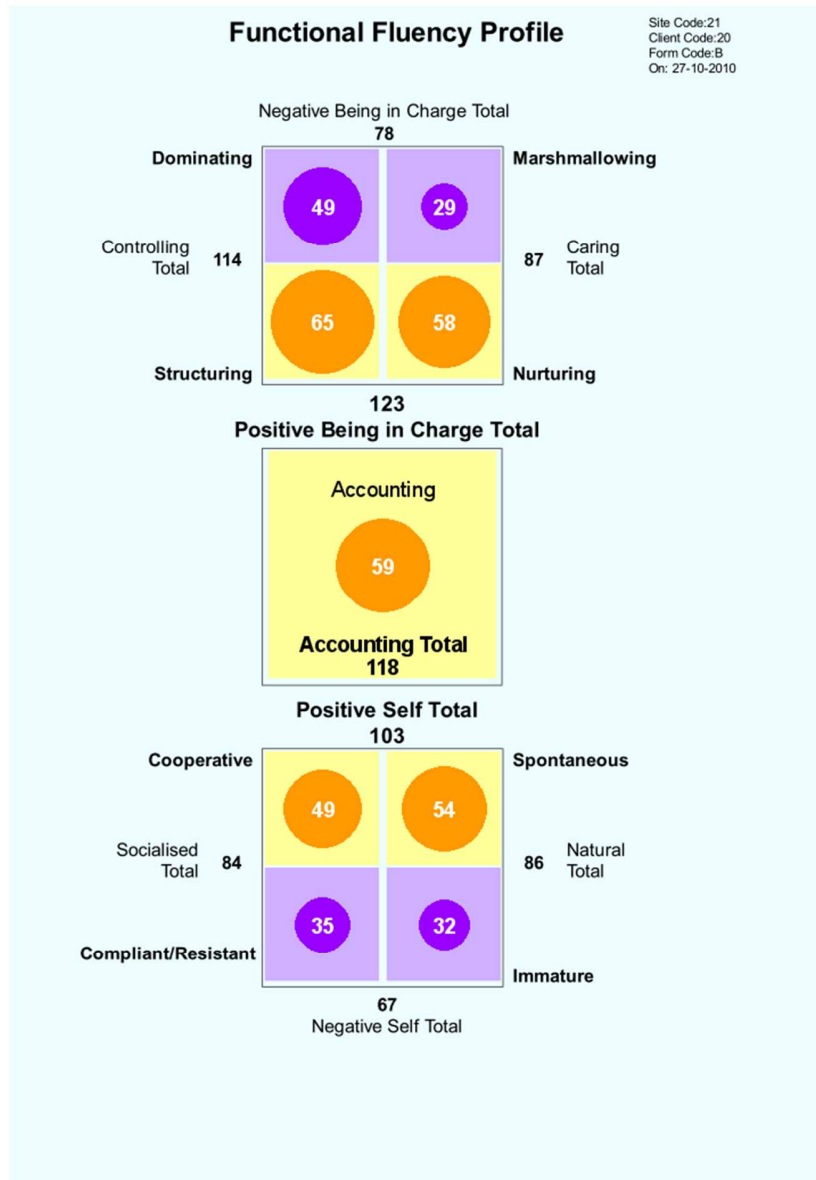


Diagram 6.20<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Mode scores only have relative meaning, viewed in relation to others to indicate patterns and balances so to explore potential significance. Appendix 6E provides an overview of ratios. The ratio is 1, so anything over 1 is positive; a ratio of 2 means that the positive is double the negative; likewise 3 means the positive is treble the negative. The profile is unique to an individual person and is not an indicator of 'type'. The focus is on the behaviour not the person. In Accounting 57-59 is considered 'evenish'; 55-61 simply termed 'a bit more uneven'.

My written analysis contained over six thousand words. Here I will provide a brief overview and will then select aspects I considered were pertinent in stoking contemporary urges and reactions I experienced during research. The extracts also served to provide insight and perspective to comprehend pupil behaviour presented in Chapter Five. It is noted giving primary attention to negative modes is contrary to TIFF methodology, which emphasises recognising, building on and celebrating the positive. However, the arrangement of data in this chapter, which begins by highlighting my dealings with the affable majority of pupils is consistent with this philosophy. Through these cited constructive episodes I have demonstrated an increased ability to utilize both 'structure' and 'nurture' modes to frame my authoritative stance as I sought to use positive expressions of Parent termed *control* and *care*. Qualifying the importance of the latter element, Noddings (2003) viewed presence as a fundamental feature of 'care', which she argued is an essential stance in teaching. Referring to the concept of connection found in personal relationships, and resonating with my practice at the beginning of lessons, she offers a pragmatic application:

"I do not need to establish a lasting, time-consuming personal relationship with every student'...'What I must do is to be totally and non-selectively present to the student—to each student—as he addresses me. The time interval may be brief but the encounter is total" (p.180).

However, my TIFF profile revealed that an inclination to control (114 represented the highest score on the sheet), or more accurately to subdue pupils, was still apparent during this phase of research and so necessitated reflexive thought. Interestingly, Temple has since pointed out in conversation (20/02/2014) that 'control' comes from old French 'controller' and refers to regulate. It is a value-free term, hence Level Two of the Functional Fluency model (Diagram 6.19 above) uses the words 'guiding and directing' (Temple 2008; 2009a). It is only at Level Three does the model make a value judgement through the modes *structuring* and *dominating* (Diagram 6.20). Control is thus an umbrella term which I had come to interpret first as 'good', and then questioned that assumption as I became more aware of its negative connotations and

impact on my well-being and classroom relations. Level Three of the Functional Fluency model articulated the distinction between *structuring* and *dominating* as expressions of control, which either benefits or oppresses. Examining my use of 'control', the ontology content in Chapter Four is clearly illustrative of the negative *behavioural mode* termed 'dominating' (Diagram 6.20 above & Appendix 6A). This mode of behaviour derives from a life script position which suggested, according to FF sub-descriptors, that *I know better*; and that perceived opposition evoked *blame, accusations, put-downs and fault-finding* in me. These prominent traits, which still threatened to manifest when I was dealing with disruptive pupils, are encapsulated by the phrase '*I'm OK – You're not OK*' (Harris 1985).

Upon interrogation of my scores, I realised my persona had come to imitate the perception I held of my dad. As I became a teacher the trait of "being 'strict' as a technique nearly always involved a mode of behaviour defined by Temple (2009a) as 'Dominating'. This was not a surprise to me. More unexpected was the inquiry which probed how much energy I used to *dominate myself*. This opened up discussion with Temple about perfectionist traits mentioned earlier in the study (4.2.6). Reflection on excessive mental rehearsal, which drained energy and deprived me of peace, opened up an avenue which was hidden from me. Much of my existence, or Accounting was spent re-living the past or projecting to the future. The ensuing reflexivity to qualify the amount of energy TIFF indicated I expended in the different modes of behaviour, is conveyed through narrative I recorded in my diary blog. The ensuing intention is to reveal injunctions or 'drivers' (Widdowson 2010) such as the urge to control, which continued to affect my contemporary performance. In line with Walls et al.'s (2001) findings, my recollections through these exemplars revealed an extreme paucity in recalling academic memories from school days. Banks (2001) advanced photo-elicitation as a basis for provoking vague recollections.



### 6.7.2: Core gimmicks

The initial extract from my extensive notes indicate, embedded within the TIFF profile, there are some core themes which may account for habitual traits apparent in the way I behave decades on. It is written in the context of my dad leaving our family when I was five years old.

“The family was dependent on the State, frequently going without food for days until we could draw family allowance on the Monday. This instantly dwindled as the previous week’s debt was paid back so ensuring another hungry weekend awaited. Our plight ensured we were destined to become victims, prey to the bigger boys from other families. It was in these situations I felt most vulnerable and incompetent for I was the eldest. Within the confines of our walls, as years passed I am aware I often took advantage of my elder status to dominate my three younger brothers, my sister, as well as my mother. However, the little ‘general’ became inhibited as his dominance diminished at the very mention of his father’s name who was a well-known ‘hard man’ around the East End. I am saddened to think of the injunctions that young boy internalised: ‘don’t be a child for you are now the man of the house’, and the inference from his dad’s exploits: ‘to be a man means being tough; to be the son of George Warren screams out ‘don’t be weak’”.



Figure 6.2

TA suggests observation of authority figures are significant [Temple 2008]. The disparity in scores between ‘control’ and ‘care’ (114-87) – [Diagram 6.20 – p.244] might be attributed to beliefs assimilated by my formative self. I strived to imitate my dad as

head of the family and did so through selective domination: conversely, I rejected and became hardened to my mum's right to govern me as she flitted between ineffectively trying to control and allowing me too much freedom – or in TIFF terms she 'marshmallowed' me" (see Appendix 6A).

The inadequacy of parenting I received was exemplified during a period of immense vulnerability as I experienced transition to secondary school. Beyond the safety net of primary school I was painfully ill-prepared, which resulted in my mum assisting truancy which led to a transfer to another school at the end of Y7 (Figure 6.3). The patterns highlighting my weak state outside of my abode reoccurred throughout my childhood.

### 6.7.3: Exposure



Figure 6.3

"I could not begin to try some of the antics and attitude my mum and select teachers witnessed, towards some of the older boys in the school. Their standing and reputation left me feeling insignificant and powerless. These feelings became acute through a very uncomfortable experience one day when walking home from school. Now in the 4<sup>th</sup> Year (Year 10), I had to travel through a notorious estate and was confronted by residents who also happened to be in the year group above me. They were bigger, stronger, more assured than me. I was aware that one of them was a boxer. Without actually hitting me I was left feeling totally intimidated by their mocking attitude as my confused state left me near paralysed as they continuously blocked my path. Such a feeling of incompetence was not new to me. An absent dad meant that my siblings and I were subjected to the dominance of the 'Irish family' throughout our primary school years.

These boys were older and bigger than us and we became their prey. My shouting mum did not deter them as we resorted to running whenever we saw them and entering and exiting our house by climbing in and out the back window. The same pattern repeated itself on our new estate which we moved to in 1978, to coincide with my move from one secondary school to the other. Again relative security was withdrawn as a new, older family moved in and turned from being my mates to my intimidators. The fact that I was the eldest of my clan highlighted my impotence even more. That I can name every single boy and recount in great detail incidents from all three sets of oppressors is testament to the deep impact these incidents had upon my formative psyche”.

Temple (2002a: p.9) suggested troublesome incidents such as these can become fixated if unintegrated into Adult and are “therefore available for transferential cathexis in moments of stress... [and teachers are] liable in the professional situation to be triggered out of Adult into replaying material”.

#### **6.7.4: The Socialised Self & teachers**

According to Gudmundsdottir (1997) narratives and biographies can be used to gain an insight into teaching, unlike any attainable via other approaches. In these brief sections, content is extracted through analysing the scores and descriptors from the ‘socialised self’ modes (Diagram 6.20 & Appendix 6A):

“I saw, for the first time that my teachers provided a relatively safe stage in which I was able to assert, challenge and resist periodically. True, some could (and did) give me the cane but that was a decent trade-off and actually deemed a symbol of status. It was almost a preferable choice to the deadening requirement to copy out line after line of a corrective sentence in detention starting with the words (aka Bart Simpson) ‘I must not...’

My teachers, whose very presence protected me from the ‘imagined’ threat of the older boys, inexplicably also provided a target which enabled me to feel powerful and significant again. Some did so by becoming a scapegoat for my non-compliance and rebellious show of defiance. I could get away with it, just as I did with my mum. Others restored my sense of security as they provided boundaries which signalled order and safety. The latter acted as a ‘proxy’ of sorts, filling the void left by an absent father figure. They enabled me to adorn the appropriate role of a child”.



Figure 6.4

### 6.7.5: Parental figures

My process for recalling significant teachers was aided by sketching images which represented my memories of them (Figure 6.4). I found the exercise absorbing.

“The tall guy at the back with a beard is Mr S. A wonderful, caring man who showed me glimpses of how important values and principles are. When I say he ‘showed me glimpses’, I am referring to my ability to recognise and appreciate them. He was and is a passionate man, set against the inequalities and injustices of this world. It is he that I think of most as I undertake this research. I spoke to him recently on the phone.

Wonderful! His recollection of me was I was a very angry young man. I was surprised, as I assumed I had shielded that side of me from him. It prompts me to remember my social conditions were always the context behind every single experience of school I document here – from primary through secondary.

The chap at the front right is Mr M. Another I kept in touch with and came to know as a man. I helped him build three houses. He was the one that inspired and assisted me in going back to education and becoming a teacher, having left school with next to no qualifications to drift into work on building sites. Very cool, a reputation for being 'hard'. His very presence did the trick. As Head of Year, he had status to back him up, but he didn't have to rely on that. Only a short bloke but came across as very self-assured which shaped our perception of him. I remember being very receptive of his approval. Observe me with these two and I would be labelled a compliant, even cooperative likeable young man. Indeed I could be and was able to adopt this mask at a moment's notice so wearing it at the appropriate hour was no problem."

"What a strange logic that I reasoned Mr R, and P [second left and middle] 'can't control me' and so I ran riot, whilst the very strict Mr L [left] provoked fierce, subversive resistance as he 'had no right to try and control me'. Further still, the kind, caring Mr S and the Head of Year, Mr M, did not require any form of control as I yielded without fuss to their right to educate me. My interest settles for a moment on these two significant authority figures in my early adolescent years - Mr S - Chris and Mr M - Trevor. The fact that I maintained contact nearly three decades on poses the question as to what the bond was. Was it apparent then? Was it an interest they took in me? Was it a principle in them? I doubt if they kept in touch with many of the thousands of students they must have taught throughout their careers. If I had to get it down to one factor it is this: my over-riding memory is a feeling that Chris cared for me, and Trevor liked me. Can it be as simple as that?"

In retrospect what a relief to be able to revert to my appropriate role as vulnerable child when a 'strong' non-threatening adult is involved. The focus contributes to literature on gender. In particular, I consider Biddulph's (2003) emphasis on the significance of men in the lives of 'under-fathered' boys. For me, the TIFF analysis had now conflated to consider the variable effect of prominent adults on my formative years. I sensed even the most important of teachers were merely subsidiary figures in comparison to a place reserved for my absent father in my young life.

#### **6.7.6: Exposed again**

"Overlapping my time in upper secondary and the world of work was a definitive experience in my adolescence. I joined a boxing club at age 15. When I say 'joined', my dad took me as he wanted me to learn how to fight. After having only limited contact through earlier years, this at least represented a chance to bond. I had actually expressed interest in joining a weight-lifting gym but that fell on deaf ears. It is only on reflection that the gentle encouragement, affirmation and caring from the adults at the club provided a foundation in which self-respect and identity grew. There were few rules, just a code which guided all we were becoming.



Figure 6.5

The club was open seven days a week and my joining coincided with the end of my turbulent testing period at school.” This is indicated in one of my school reports from 1980 (below).

Inner London Education Authority		<b>SUBJECT REPORT</b>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <b>School</b>		NAME <u>Sean Warren</u>	
DATE <u>July 1981</u> FORM <u>40</u>		SUBJECT <u>History</u>	
<b>REMARKS:</b> <p>Over the year, Sean is possibly the most improved pupil in either of my two 4th Year groups. This means, admittedly, that he made a poor start to the course, making very little effort at all with his written work. However, I am very pleased indeed that Sean has really begun to take himself + the course seriously.</p> <p>Obviously, there is still a very great deal that will need to be done next year. Sean has had problems with the material for his project, but now these are beginning to be sorted out, he has made much more progress.</p> <p>Sean will have to concentrate on the written course work next year. He is an intelligent student who has displayed a very clear grasp of many of the topics, but he must make sure that this potential is fulfilled + that he begins to do himself justice on paper. With the right approach, he could do very well.</p> <p>Sean is now pleasant + co-operative in lessons.</p>			
HPC 2389		_____ SUBJECT TEACHER	

Figure 6.6

At ‘the club’ I did well. Although I lost my first fight I put up a great show in front of my dad and I recall his pride as he paraded my battle scars off to his mates in the pub afterwards.



Figure 6.7

Interest grew as my dad sold tickets with glee to family and his drinking companions. My first home bout as a 15 year old novice catapulted me to mini celebrity status as around 40 of the crowd filed in to specifically cheer on George Warren's boy.



Figure 6.8

"I won five out of my next six, losing only to a majority decision. Even then my reputation was enhanced as it was revealed I had broken my thumb in the first round. It is clear now, what I suspected then – the expectations were too much for that young boy to carry. By the time I was 17 all I wanted to do was to hide. I pulled out of a home show but was convinced by my dad that I would be letting everyone down. I reluctantly agreed to fight. The brief flirtation with the prestige of being a winner was replaced by intense insecurity and doubt. Climbing into a ring, being centre of attention in front of so many people I knew, provoked an acute sense of vulnerability.

The ring can be a very lonely place. I got soundly beat, although it is fair to say I was beaten before the bell even rang. I wasn't to know my opponent would go on to become a professional champion. Regardless, the event left me embarrassed, humiliated and very angry. I buried these feelings; this is the first time I have confronted and expressed what happened back in 1983. I had been publically exposed. I recognise the feeling too well as it resounds through my narrative.

I detect now the beginning of a new hardness in the reconstruction of my persona as I present myself to people who are oblivious to my catalogue of shame about being a victim - a victim to my circumstances and fodder for older, bigger lads. On this specific



occasion I think it was more the imagined shame I felt on behalf of my dad as he watched on with his pals – something had changed from that night in my perception of how others perceived me. As stated, embarrassed and angry in equal measure, I sought to deny the experience and bury it for no-one ever offered me an alternative. I resolved never to be a victim again. Sensitive souls at the club held me up creating opportunities to work with the younger boys. The thoughtful restoration was sealed by my position as club captain for three consecutive years. The club's guardians are dead now and the club is no more".

The coverage above represents a brief summary of my exploration of TIFF. Qualifying my professional story (Chapter Four) I now recognise an aversion to any insinuation that a pupil (or senior colleague) is trying to bully, or impose their will upon me. With pupils it provoked a dominating reaction, with Leadership it caused me to revert to 'Resistant' mode, stoking a rebellious reaction (Appendix 6A). A catalogue of disputes with line managers testify to this.

In essence the analysis of stimuli qualifying the TIFF data sought to explore sources of imbalance in my scores. These positive modes of behaviours are dependent on my 'Accounting' in 'Adult' to enable me to function effectively in the 'here and now', so to be able to make an assessment on reality: to be 'with-it'. The capacity to 'live in the present', rather than re-living past events or envisaging the future, was a significant challenge for me especially when I frequently lay awake in the middle of the night, as illustrated in 6.6.4.

Upon review of data I had previously collected in my diary blog (below), I was now able to more fully appreciate the grip a faulty time perspective had on shaping my thoughts and thus experience of 'being'. Zimbardo & Boyd's (2008) study of time perspective prompted an inopportune inquiry. My inner constructed reality drew extensive energy as I sought to adorn the mask of professionalism. I suspected this was draining me of the capacity to be 'present'. Recorded in November 2009:

"I was interested to see if I could begin to analyse the thoughts and emotions that fuel my inherent discomfort causing me to either compromise my values (experience being a 'living contradiction'), or remind me to put on my professional mask.

I invested in an digital 'clicker counter' and have explored the idea of clicking every time I recognise a negative thought connected to work, no matter how fleeting.



Figure 6.9

Today was the launch; I attached it to my wrist. An interesting day as I had little or no responsibility as I was supporting an external team who were leading Y10s on a 'Challenge day'. I therefore anticipated a minimal number of clicks as I was removed from direct authoritarian teacher/ student/ formal curriculum.

From waking until the end of school (3:15 p.m.) I recognised 41 occasions when a thought / discomforting moment either danced across my consciousness or I caught it as I began the process of entertaining it. Of the 41, 22 were registered even before I came into contact with a single student!

The majority were directed in my head towards staff colleagues. In particular those whose decisions are having an effect on me or what was considered MINE at work. The form tutor who uses my classroom, the Head of House who made a decision to put her in there, another Head of House who nominated my room as one of the core classrooms for today's event, and him again because I would lose two free periods today whilst

supporting this Y10 Challenge day. All of these 'incidents' manifested in hypothetical dialogue in my mind with each time resulting in my self-righteous indignation. As none of the 'incidents' had actually taken place they were based on speculative future occurrences.

The thoughts were reoccurring for much of pre-work and started almost immediately upon waking. Each time I recognised and clicked and then let it depart. The more they reappeared the quicker I was able to recognise them and reject them. I was also aware of the tenseness that accompanied those thoughts which had momentarily slipped under the radar and settled before I recognised them. Upon letting them go I was able to physically feel the difference in my muscles and expression (I caught myself frowning) as deep breaths dissolved its effect”.

The subsequent effect of giving my full attention to my pupils through ‘Accounting’ in the present was profound. Through application of these models, I grasped the opportunity to appreciate the young people, to notice and approve, to observe and re-direct, to begin to decipher ‘invitations to play games’ even in the midst of disruption.

Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2006: p.265) description of presence in teaching resonates:

“a state of alert awareness, receptivity, and connectedness to the mental, emotional, and physical workings of both the individual and the group in the context of their learning environments, and the ability to respond with a considered and compassionate best next step”.

Hargreaves (1994) saw the importance of rooting self-knowledge in ‘conceptions of the good and the welfare of others’ for presence has a moral imperative (Rodgers & Raider-Roth 2006). Evidence to suggest I was getting closer to a balance was becoming apparent within the research data. *Respect* is a value which acts as a thread throughout the research period. It is

mentioned 105 times in questionnaire responses. I have amalgamated some comments (referenced in Appendix 6B) which perhaps are more discerning, for they correspond with the study's core aim:

"We know that it's a balance – if we treat the teacher with respect, we get fun and enjoyment back; You are firm but fair and never raise your voice because you treat everyone like young adults and with respect; You respect us and believe we can do things; You give the same amount of respect to anyone in the classroom; You give us freedom, but not too much that we can take advantage of it because you explain to us what you expect in the lesson; ... you kind of look disappointed which makes us feel obliged to behave; if you are annoyed you don't shout but explain your disappointment which has more effect; ... you'd make me feel bad if I was naughty because I know I'd let you down ... Because you show respect towards everyone so no-one wants to throw it back in your face; You treat us with respect and this makes us want to do the same back; You're not too strict so people aren't afraid to answer any questions you ask; You don't take everything too seriously but you are serious when you should be".

### **6.8: Underlying peer relations**

Through the reflexive process I was gradually becoming more aware of my own internal triggers; I was increasingly able to decode the hidden goals behind pupil behaviour; Temple's (1992a) Four Model link-up enabled me to guide group formations. A unique opportunity then arose to add another dimension to my study of classroom climate as I inherited a Y9 class in February 2010. Three aspects made this group potentially difficult: First they were timetabled for RE on a Friday afternoon; secondly, they had formed the previous September and had become well established with another teacher; and thirdly, the cohort had been put together by the PE department and contained most of the school Y9 rugby team. They would prove to be the perfect challenge to enact all I had been practising and to maximise insights from data, indicating peer social patterns and preferences.

An administration error meant I was unaware of the precise class list prior to meeting the group. The first entry into my research diary captured my response:

“When I saw this motley crew converge outside my room I began to quickly mentally dress for rainy weather. Many of the ‘who’s-who’ of the year group came along the path, most of them were boys with strong social connections. Would they take the direction of the ‘beach’ or dash for the ‘rocks’ of disorder? I recognised many of them but had not taught about half of them. My first attempt to get their attention outside the room was either ignored or not heard. I suspected the latter and so I waited for a break in the verbal traffic and held a confident silence until eye contact and non-verbal direction gave me a platform to speak with quiet authority in relaying instruction and direction. I noted the school's latest recruit from another school (whose reputation was quickly growing here) roll up at the back of the group. Great!

The class came in and settled quickly, organising themselves as boy/girl in accordance with my direction. I waited for my moment, sitting confidently on a raised piece of furniture. They listened and followed simple instructions. I relayed my first impression of them was a positive one. Looking around the room I redefined their tendency to exhibit unhelpful behaviour in other classes as being 'spirited' rather than bad behaviour. “I like spirit”, I told them, “but I am aware some misrepresent themselves and are not always sure of boundaries and when to stop”. They seemed to like that affirmation.

As with all the new classes this week I explained I thought it unfair if they had to guess the teacher's expectations. I had on the board a list of expectations wrapped up in 'routines'. If they agreed with the routine and felt they could yield to their requirements they were asked to write the routine on the inside cover of their book. I explained the routine whilst recording progressed and invited any questions or objections. I was able to stroll into their territory as they were writing. One routine listed involved my

intention to always give them breaks following periods of about 13-15 minutes of concentration. Drink, chat and wander would be possible on condition of returning ready for the next episode. They liked the idea of that and we demonstrated it within the next few minutes. Will have to be on my mettle for next time as I don't want to fall into the trap of coming to the lesson underdressed and getting caught, exposed by unexpected changes in the weather”.

I later reflected:

“I was interested to observe my inner reaction upon recognising the group’s characters as they converged. Just prior to meeting them an unconscious negative, deep defensive 'thing' gripped me. It was gone before I could respond with any inner pep talk to challenge it. Maybe that is what fear or insecurity is when it reaches beyond the experienced professional I present at my place of work”.

The definitive insight this class provided came through a concentrated analysis on an aspect of research I had been tentatively trialling with other groups. Sociometrics, originated from Moreno (1934), provided visual representation of the established social friendships inherent within the class. Some of these might have stemmed from primary school or sports teams; others may be fleeting or come in the form of cliques (Closson 2009). Nisbet (1970) encapsulated the fundamental problem of sociometric data, when he pointed out that it does not indicate the *strength* of friendship. However, Farmer (2000) concluded that whilst a pupils’ own sociometric choices may be a poor guide to the existence of friendships, mutual choices were usually confirmed by observation and therefore considerably more reliable.

In their second lesson with me I presented the pupils with four questions:

1. Who would you prefer to sit near?
2. Who would you prefer to work with?
3. Who would you prefer to share a room with on a trip abroad?
4. Who would you prefer not to sit near?

The students could indicate from nil to 5 peers for each question; it was clarified the last question was optional and answers would remain confidential. It was assumed if pupils did select classmates from the 'negative' question, the choice would be significant for them. I present data (below) from the first question to illustrate insights gained. Data assigns pupils to five groups: *popular* students, who are well liked by many peers and seldom disliked (high social preference); *rejected* students, who are frequently disliked and not well liked (low social preference); *controversial* students, who are both liked and disliked (high social impact); *neglected* students, who receive very few liked or disliked nominations (low social impact); and *average* students, who receive an average number of liked and disliked nominations (Košir & Pečjak 2005: p.128).

Positive Question: I would choose to sit near these students

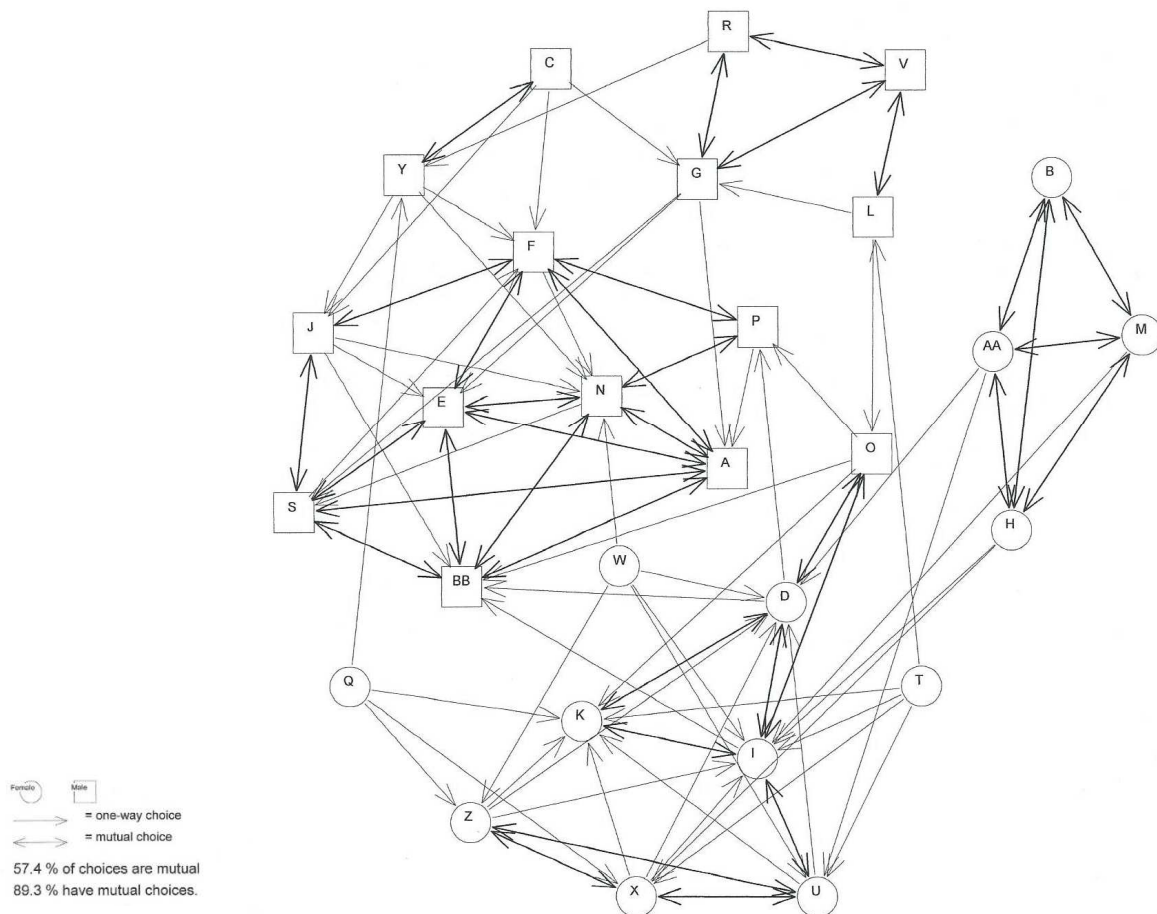


Diagram 6.21

Data immediately challenged my preconceptions about which pupils were the 'leaders' within the class. I realised that already I was spending a disproportionate amount of time subtly trying to appease individuals I thought influenced the climate (L, O & R). I realised the 'Stars of Attraction' (those attracting most votes) were relatively quiet, unassuming children. I was also now aware of the peers who were significant to them ('Stars of Influence'). Francis et al. (2010) observed that it is possible for some pupils to achieve the 'balance' between sociability and achievement, so avoiding being marginalised with the label of 'boffin' or 'geek'. Often exhibiting behaviours which were not excessively disruptive, they displayed good-humoured 'cheek' and 'attitude' rather than overt resistance or confrontation. The authors identified a propensity to play the 'fall guy' whilst gaining kudos via association with more disruptive friends, without incurring the same disciplinary consequences. Informing Davies & Hunt's (1994) study observing the binary positioning of pupils in response to prominent discourses which labelled pupils, Vargas (2011) found balanced power relations within groups insulated adolescents from peer pressure, even when some peers were disruptive. Unbalanced power relations were defined as those containing marginal members who were relatively powerless and dependent on the group for value affirmation. This resonated with my experience of habitual traits reported in lower sets.

Clear patterns began to emerge which suggested if I won over a few individuals I could indirectly influence the majority of the group. Those who were most 'popular' represented an obvious choice, although consideration of the *controversial* pupils causing the highest social impact was key to ensure cohesion within the group (A, S & Z). DeRosier & Thomas (2003) identified this cohort as most likely to be bullies and relationally aggressive. I began to ensure when I sought class opinion I would discreetly note their responses amongst others. I negligibly canvassed their opinion and included them amongst pupils invited to lead or direct the lesson flow. The negative nominations enabled me to be aware of possible areas of contention, to amend seating arrangements and, allowed me to notice previously obscured cues.



The data also revealed (or confirmed) the group's *Isolates*. Labels such as *Isolate* and *Star* need qualification and should not be taken at face-value. For example, Ashley (1992) witnessed the pupil with the lowest sociometric score was observed, during recess, to interact with other children on more than half the number of times of the student with the highest sociometric score. Contextual data is also confined to specific groupings of pupils which is likely to not contain many of their friends. Perhaps illustrative of this in my data, one child (Q) a girl with ADHD was painfully devoid of friendships within this Y9 class. She sat by herself and was very taxing in her dependence on me to affirm and reaffirm tasks. Attempts to gain peer assistance through moving her prompted emotional defensive reactions from her which had then to be calmed. The 'negative' data revealed 8 classmates chose her as a peer they would choose *not* to sit near, thus placing her in the category 'rejected'.

Zettergren's (2003) results showed that 'rejected' children are a risk group which schools must cater for. These children were likely to experience problems over a long period of time, and are integral to high dropout statistics. DeRosier & Thomas (2003) found highly rejected children were at extreme risk for victimization, whilst Farmer (2000); Mayeux et al. (2007) associated negative behavioural traits to pupils in this category. I suspect RC in 6.6.2 would most likely qualify for this classification. Warrington & Younger (2011: p.165) advanced a broader perspective claiming:

"schools which are locally popular, which receive excellent reports from government inspectors, and where students have high levels of academic achievement... have a responsibility to identify and support isolated students... [to move beyond] the rhetoric of inclusivity".

In this case no pupils selected Q to sit near, work with or share a room with. However, scrutiny showed Q consistently nominated two girls (K & Z)<sup>13</sup>. Their data responses did not reject Q. As a result I was able to quietly inform K & Z of Q's preference and inquire whether they would be open to assisting Q periodically if she was stuck. I was then able to confidently request K or Z's help and observed Q receive them without a fuss and proceed to address the task.

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<sup>13</sup> Q also chose 'Y' – a non-attending 'Rejected' boy to work with; and 'X' to sit with, but not work with.

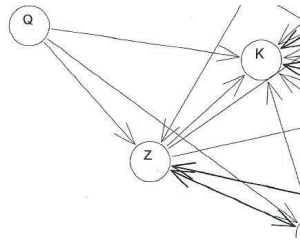


Diagram 6.22

Although space prevents me from documenting individuals' affirmative comments of our lessons, the class' evaluation of their performance in comparison to their general behaviour in other lessons, is presented below.

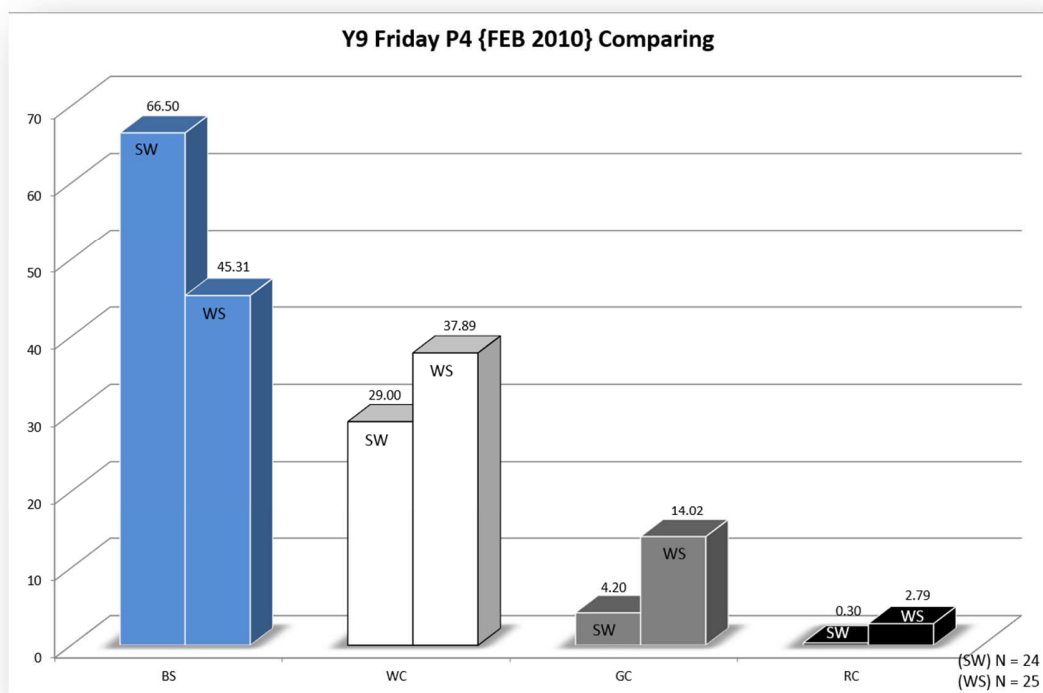


Diagram 6.23

The connection I made with this class is demonstrative of my experience of what Surrey (1991: p.61) described as 'relationship authenticity'. Here in the midst of research I felt I was "seen and recognized for who [I am] ...and [met] the need to see and understand the other".

## 6.9: Subtle control infused in pedagogy

My action research had thus far concentrated on creating a climate which minimised the possibility of disruption, and demonstrated the process I undertook to enhance my capacity to cope, whilst operating according to stated values. For much of the research period there was little indication that the nature of teaching and learning ought to qualify for further scrutiny. My pedagogical approach had evolved over many years. In 1998 I was greatly influenced by Smith's (1996) *Accelerated Learning*; I then incorporated *Thinking Skills* (DfES 2005) into my schemes; and in 2004 I became qualified to deliver Claxton's (2002) *Building Learning Power* programme. The amalgamated strands elicited exclusive grade 1: 'Outstanding' from every internal and external observer from 2000-2008. As research commenced I added Conroy's (2008: p.10) view on *Liminal Learning*, which advocated the use of characterisation. He argued that pupils could, by engaging and exploring insights to be gleaned from the periphery, "learn to see with different eyes... [as they] explore the position of others". I fused this with my established approach to convert schemes of work for all Units into creative and coherent storylines around real issues. These invited pupils to empathise and affect scenes, scenarios and dilemmas in which the characters were embroiled. An example is provided in Appendix 6F which directs pupils to interact independently with selected peers and fictional jury members, whose views were located within a range of resources. My approach was further enhanced by Petty's (2006) *PAR model* (Appendix 6G). Synthesising the meta-analysis empirical studies of both Hattie (2003) and Marzano (1998), Petty produced an accessible resource for teachers to digest the findings of evidence-based studies. Affirming much of what I had intuitively recognised as good practice, my perfectionist tendencies set about reorganising schemes of work to complement the new structure.

Although I was greatly encouraged by the response from the majority of pupils, I became acutely aware that apparent order did not necessarily equate to individual cooperation or group performance. Three responses to a question enquiring *why [you] / classmates behave in my lessons*, took me completely by surprise and added a further dimension to research.

Mentioned in 6.4.3, and contrary to the vast majority of responses received, a trio of Y9 boys from the same class wrote:

9TH3M3:

“By being patronising, quite annoying. Because we don't want to really get into trouble with you”.

9TH3M7:

“You are patronising and too controlling. Because you patronise everyone until they have no other motives (1984 - George Orwell)”.

9TH3M11:

“Quite patronising and very annoying but I behave out of respect. Because they are respectful”.

The revelation shook my confidence and provoked a defensive reaction which I had to quell. Analysis of sociometric data revealed the three boys had nominated each other and were clearly an established sub-group. As the three did not sit together and were not forewarned about the questionnaire, the answers strongly suggest that pupils do discuss their learning experience outside of lessons. A review of their comparative Weather estimates confirmed substantial disengagement with my lesson:

		Blue Skies / Sunshine	White Clouds	Grey Clouds	Rain Clouds
<b>9TH3M3</b>	My lesson:	0	95	5	0
	General Performance:	80	15	5	0
<b>9TH3M7</b>	My lesson:	0	80	20	0
	General Performance:	70	30	0	0
<b>9TH311</b>	My lesson:	40	60	0	0
	General Performance:	90	10	0	0

Table 6.2

Some months after I had finished teaching the group, I approached 9TH3M7 and requested an interview so to better understand his use of the term 'patronise'. The pupil, a self-assured, able student accepted the invitation without hesitation. The interview represented the feedback I had stipulated to the pupils when they had the option of recording their names as part of the first cohort to consider the end of unit questionnaires. The boy was not surprised that his comment represented a minority view. He was less harsh than he had been in his comment as he eloquently explained his experience of being subjected to a subtle form of control that I had administrated through my teaching method. Over-prescription, in the form of task and groupings, constricted his desire to express his independence and ensured he was disengaged, though compliant. I realised a subtle distinction. In essence, I had placed an emphasis on teaching the subject, rather than teaching the pupils.

I had long realised that the nature of the teaching and learning experience is integral to the likelihood of behaviour disruptions. This is supported by data in 5.8.1. I also came to acknowledge my lesson structure acted to quell the possibility of pupils being off-task. Despite consistently achieving 'Outstanding' judgements, essentially, I did not trust classes to behave if I gave them more freedom. Incongruent with my relational approach, my pedagogical method remained comparatively restrictive and conditional. Whilst I was now challenged to engage

with Morrison's (2008: p.20) questions, which asked: "How can autonomy, creativity, and cooperative and collaborative learning be promoted in learners?" I was aware that many of my learners had learned to deal with lesson demands by being (over)dependent on me to give clear, unambiguous directives. I was sceptical that they could cope with encouragement to be more autonomous. However, in light of my research question which asked whether my approach could *contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils*, it was apparent to me that omitting study of the pedagogical exchange would render my coverage incomplete. Subsequently, *trust* was identified as my standard of judgement for this aspect of research.

McDermott (1977: p.199) viewed trust in the teacher–student relationship as "a quality of the relations among people, as a product of the work they do to achieve a shared focus. Trust is achieved and managed through interaction". Tzu (2007) acknowledged the tension between teacher control and children's freedom. I came to realise the PAR model (Appendix 6G) had lured me into formulating my creative approach. The discrepancy between what I espoused and what I produced was subtle, yet profound, and elucidated for me both the distinction between 'Norming' and 'Performing', and between compliance and cooperation (Temple 2009b – Appendix 6A).

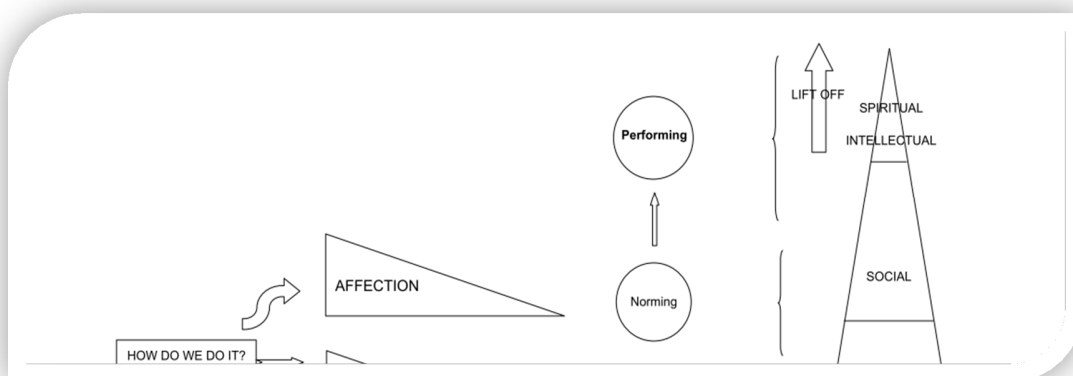


Diagram 6.24

Slavin (1987) described cooperative learning as an approach based on humanistic principles. In a review of 35 studies he concluded improvement in non-academic outcomes, such as pupil

self-esteem and relations between students, facilitated gains in achievement. Hattie's (2009) meta-analysis showed consistent positive effect sizes. Goleman (2006) coined the phrase 'social intelligence' to facilitate this approach, whilst Gilles (2007) attributed the opportunities to interact as contributing to an enhanced sense of personal agency or control.

### **6.9.1: Reconceptualising 'disorder'**

As a consequence I turned again to Complexity Theory to guide my application. Building on my coverage of emergent behaviour (see section 5.9.), Sawada & Caley (1985) argued the prevailing view of classrooms as turbulent, messy and disorderly, should make room for the possibility that disorderliness (i.e. turbulence) can be productive. Kauffman (1995) suggested "order comes for free and replaces control; internally generated; it is the antithesis of external control; [it] is not imposed; it emerges" (Morrison 2008: p.18). Tosey (2002) provided the phrase 'Minimal Structures' to offer me guidance and I expanded it to include 'maximum choices'.

I came to reconceptualise my classroom realising the difference between the terms 'complicated' and 'complex' (Alhadeff-Jones 2008). As Doll (2008: p.187) articulated:

"In simple terms, one important for education, closed systems transfer and transmit, open systems transform... Closed systems function toward a pre-set goal, such as in the workings of a thermostat [or, as Haggis (2008) suggests, a mechanical engine or a clock]; open systems, in differentiation, function just to keep the right amount of imbalance, so that the system might maintain a creative dynamism".

I had already established the Sea as a metaphor for learning. The established routines (see 6.4 & 6.4.1), indicative of a calm and ordered Beach, ensured pupils had easy access to the Water. Although I creatively developed my metaphor to incorporate many aspects of the research (e.g. splashing representing low level disruptions, and the shadow of a fin symbolising underlying fear of failure), my primary focus remained on the adaptive nature of the group. I began to apply complexity principles to extract insights into the pedagogical interactions which were so familiar to me. I learned that complex systems display rhythmic movement to create stable

structure. Rea (1997) referred to this as '*fold*' and '*stretch*'. These emerge from local rules as, in accordance with Diagram 5.24 in Chapter 5, pupils *Self-Organise*. Affirming coverage in 5.6 and 5.7, the contextual rules (derived from interactions between peers and the teacher) create patterns forming the structure which is constantly receptive to both affirmative and negative feedback.<sup>14</sup> I associated the description with tidal movements.

Having congregated on the Sand, my task now was to get them to Swim – to engage with the learning. If Shallow Water represented occasions when learners were *dependent* on me, conversely, Deep Water would symbolise the ideal of *interdependence* through peer collaboration. I became attracted to the concept '*Edge of Chaos*' (Tosey 2002) as representing an optimum state of interdependent learning, conceiving it as being analogous to 'surfing the waves'.

Rea (1997: p.6) coined the term 'serious fun' to denote heightened learning motivation, as illustrative of the "phase transition of liquids that emerge between the ordered state of cold solids and the chaotic state of hot gases". The relationship between each aspect is indicated by the green dots and segments in Diagram 6.25 below, and is exemplified presently in 6.9.3.3. However, I initially considered this dynamic state to be too risky as the necessity of social interaction had potential to foster disruption - where, as shown in Chapter Five, boundaries were more likely to be tested. I needed to find a way for the tentative 'swimmer' to negotiate the progressive depth, in order for them be secure and capable enough to venture deeper into the water without succumbing to distractions. Thus I created a transitional phase ('*flex*') which recognised intermediate steps from dependence towards *independence* within the zone of complexity (Stacey et al. 2000).

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<sup>14</sup> In nature this ebb and flow can be illustrated by the delicate ecological balance between prey and predator. The unhindered positive feedback loops (resulting in rapid population growth) is curtailed by the negative feedback administered by the predator. The equilibrium in this system would also crash if hunting exceeded growth (Rea 1997).





might escalate into over-excitement. In order to influence the classroom climate I would be required to perceptively dampen enthusiasm so maintaining equilibrium for learning to emerge. This incorporated the use of breaks and the group monitoring tool from section 6.4, as well as the re-direction approaches documented in Appendix 6C. “*Emergence* is an interplay between both negative and positive feedback; it is not the absence of tension, but a dynamic balancing of opposites” (Newell 2008: p.9 italics added).

By contrast, a *fixed point or constrictive Attractor* denotes near equilibrium, like a clock pendulum eventually settling down to become static. If the pendulum is placed in a vacuum, the swinging motion is termed a limit cycle. Rea (1997) equated this with an authoritarian teacher keeping pupils strictly on-task through enforcement of predictable routines. My decision to move away from this form of customary control meant I would have to recognise the fluid balance – an “ever changing dance” (Waldrop 1993: p.230) - in which learning and relational dynamics within the group interact to have a bearing on each other. The consistency between my developments of metaphors is illustrated through the *Hydrologic Cycle* process (Koeman 2003). The scientific study of this natural interchange describes the journey water takes as it circulates from the land to the sky and back again. Cameron’s (2003) work endorsed the use of metaphor to convey principles from complex systems to frame classroom discourse. My application is broadly demonstrative of the reciprocal impact behaviour and the learning experience have on each other. Illustrated in Diagram 6.25 (below), two of the processes are evaporation and condensation. Evaporating water is changed from a liquid state to a gaseous state, such as clouds; condensation describes the opposite, when gas converts into liquid (Diagram 6.26 below). The intricacy of the exchange is borne out in my experience of classrooms, whilst engaged, Blue Sky learners seldom disrupted lessons. I observed that most of the low level behaviour problems I had witnessed over the years could be interpreted as counters to learning experiences which were either too confusing or boring.

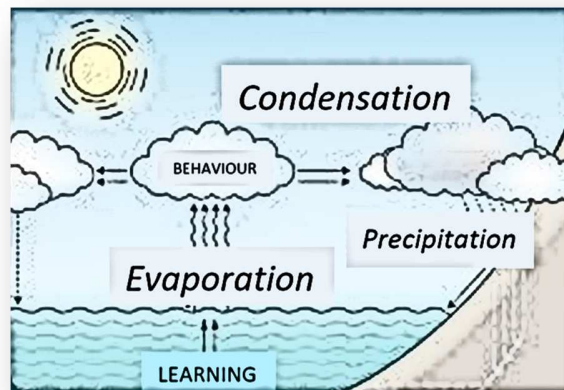


Diagram 6.26

I would strive to cultivate my stated values as a *Strange Attractor* to make them distinguishable within the patterns which manifested through our collective behaviour (World Futures Studies Federation) (WFSF 1994). In terms of my psychological and operational state, I would have to 'Account' (Temple 2007); and 'dress' appropriately (Diagram 6.1); to be and appear 'confident in uncertainty'. Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2006: p.284) argued that the climate I sought is created through "slowing down to observe students' interactions with the subject matter".

### 6.9.3: Lesson observation model: Lesson Flow & Critical Incidents

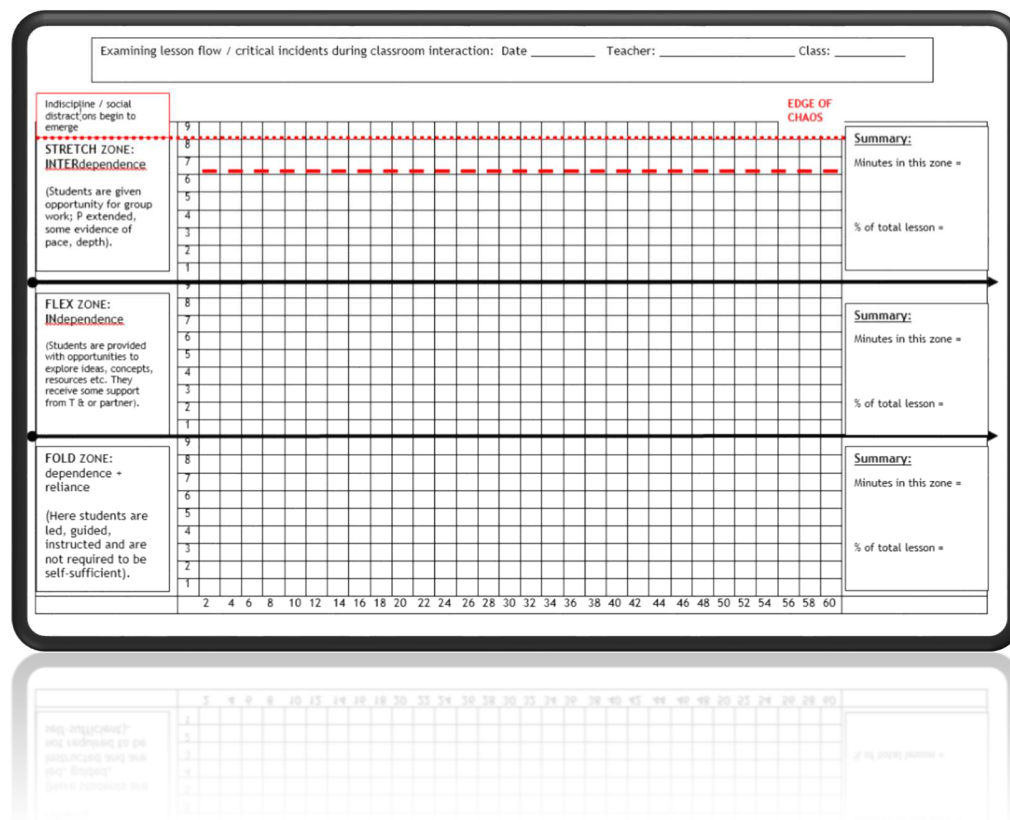


Diagram 6.27

The lesson observation model above, denotes the three phases mentioned in Diagram 6.25. Levels of intensity are shown by the vertical numbers 1-9. The qualifying criteria and measuring formula are stipulated in Appendix 6H. The horizontal numbers refer to minutes. The optimum state – the ‘Edge of Chaos’ is indicated by the thick red dashes. It recognises the risk of tipping over onto the Rocks into ‘Chaos’ due to the amount of freedom pupils have to make decisions about their learning. I found with some students, relative autonomy was readily interpreted as an invitation to give precedence to the social agenda over the learning agenda. My task in such moments was to administer feedback which dampened or rebalanced the class bringing them back to the Beach for a period. Contributing to data in 5.5.6, a broader application was affirmed through observation that groups in Period 1 tended to congregate on the Beach and needed to

quickly become engaged, whilst afternoon groups required a succession of Folding activities to dampen their abundant energy.

Conversely, whilst intent on decentralising control to create optimum emergent conditions (Mason 2008), I noted many pupils could not sustain conditions of *interdependence*. I learned that *dependence* and directive teaching still had a legitimate place within the teaching and learning interaction. I provided planned 'default' tasks which supplemented alternative choices afforded to the pupils. The notion of support through scaffolding, attributed to Bruner (1990), is reinforced by Morrison (2008: p.23) who stated "the teacher is vital intervening judiciously to scaffold and create the conditions for learning-through-self-organization and the child's emergent knowledge".

Again, I had to learn to be attentive to signs that the Attractor of boredom did not emerge due to over instruction. Instead I encouraged peers to help classmates 'make sense' in accordance with Vygotsky's (1978) 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), defined as "the 'buds' or 'flowers' of development" which have yet to mature (in Pollard 2002: p.113). Tzuo (2007) explained in addition to children's unfolding natural development through imitation and collaboration, this can be attained through adult guidance. Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2006) suggested this kind of trust asks teachers to support, scaffold and assist pupils to build their own ideas.

My students were able to communicate their comprehension / level of confidence through a traffic light system contained in their school diaries. Coloured sheets denoted whether they had 'Got it' (Green); [were] 'Not sure' (Amber); or 'Not understood yet' (Red). In my lessons Amber gave permission to the student to inquire of a peer who was on Green, first in their colour groups and then of classmates sitting on other tables. If the learner was still stuck I would directly assist as a response to their selection of Red. This method of formative self-assessment freed me from repetitious instruction, and demonstrated my commitment to greater trust and pupil autonomy. It also acted to give students responsibility for making a start on tasks rather

than coasting then exclaiming, when addressed, that they didn't understand. I introduced this idea to the school in 2000, but, according to pupils it is not used consistently by staff.

In order to understand and to respond to learners' adaptive needs during the lesson, the model's phases incorporated Behaviourist, Constructivist, and Social constructivist theoretical approaches (Pollard 2006: p.152 Figure 7.5). Behaviourist approaches to learning are associated with Skinner (1953). The 'law of effect' (Upton 1983) refers to a system of rituals which reinforce correct pupil responses; the 'law of exercise' denotes an emphasis on practice and drill. My usage was on occasions when learners were required to be *dependent* on the teacher for instruction / foundational knowledge. Comprehension was aided through steering individuals to choose from differentiated resources to supplement whole class explanations, interactive software, and core texts (below). These choices were again, consistent with traffic light symbols.



Diagram 6.28

Piaget's (1926) constructivist theory is used to encourage *independence* as learners develop mental constructs. Encompassing play and experimentation to cultivate curiosity, the approach

was popular in primary schools following The Plowden Report (1967). I utilised these aspects to develop children's concepts and skills, differentiating through choice of task. My model also addressed two key criticisms of Piaget's work identified by Pollard (2006). Firstly, in response to claims of an over-emphasis on self-discovery, I frequently drew learners' back to the Beach to affirm/correct. Here I was mindful of Dweck's (2000) work on effective feedback advocating a combination of effort and strategy. Secondly, the Stretch segment, encouraged *interdependence*, so answered critics who claimed Piaget ignored the social context in which learning takes place. This genre of learning was facilitated by Claxton's (2002) learning habits.

The practicalities of smooth transitions remained key (Kounin 1970). To illustrate, exemplars of reflection and observation show the ebb and flow of teaching and learning interactions (below). Dewey (1938) referred to 'intelligent action' to denote the process of observation, analysis and intelligent response to embody the reflective process of teaching (Rodgers 2002). Wiechart (2011) described the process of pedagogical interaction as a rhythm which the adult must heed as it reveals itself through the pupils. It is the teacher's task to find equilibrium as the group 'breathe in' (to think and concentrate), and 'breath out' to engage in imaginative, and creative endeavour. Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy offered another layer to inform my planning of the three phases. Questioning and tasks get progressively 'deeper' as 'shallow', lower order tasks (Knowledge & Comprehension), lead to middle order tasks (Application), and higher order tasks (Synthesis, Analysis, and Evaluation). I offer several applications to demonstrate the contribution this tool made to my research aims.

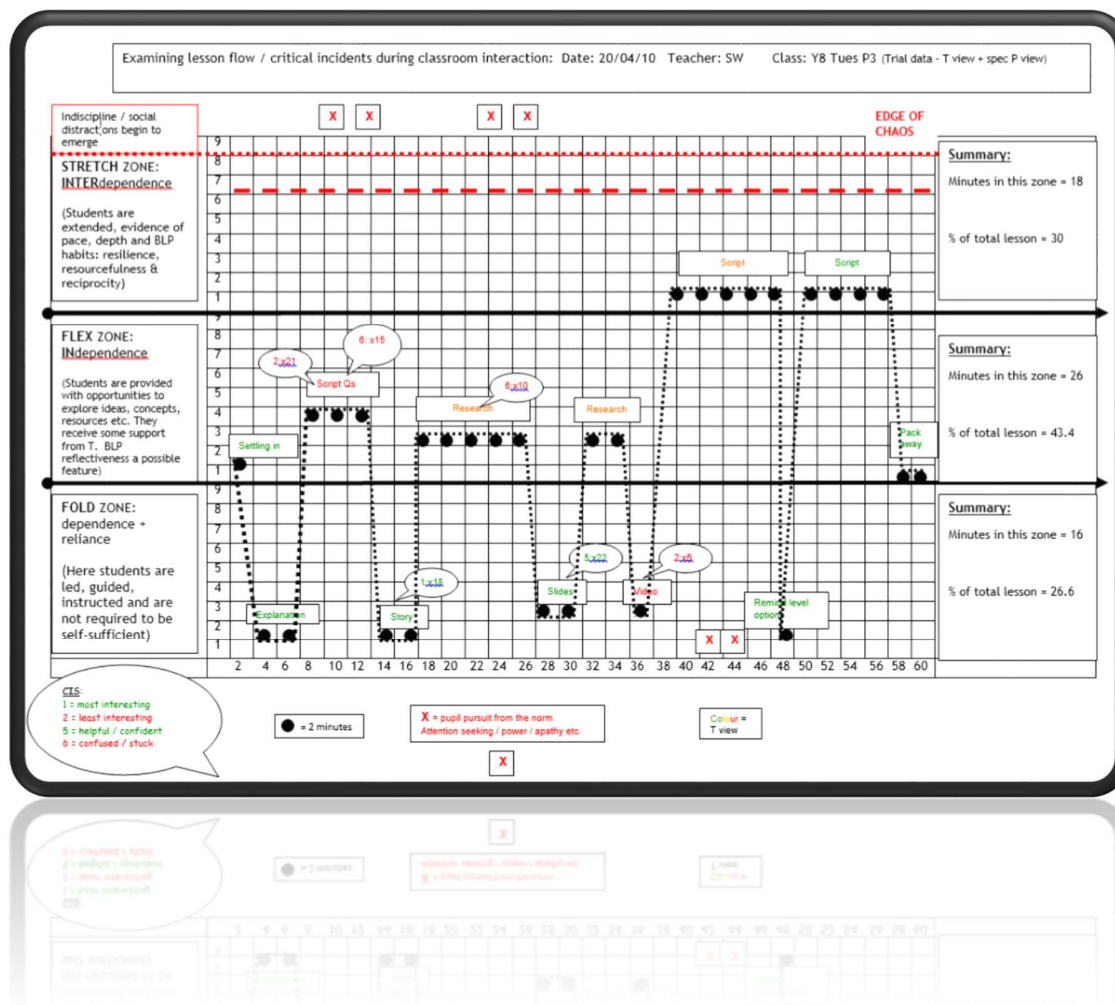


Diagram 6.29

In the diagram above I noted details during the lesson and plotted them onto the template retrospectively. The positive/negative/indifferent consensus is indicated through traffic light colours on the graph to convey pupils' evaluation alongside my own.

### 6.9.3.1: Incorporating pupil voice

The original model's capacity was expanded by encompassing pupils' anonymised perspectives using the 'Critical Incident' sheet below (Brookfield 2008). This took a few minutes and could either be administered at the end of the lesson, or provided for the class to fill in as the lesson progressed. This amended version was presented to encourage pupils' habits of resilience,



including perseverance and managing distractions (Gornall et al. 2005). The strength of the categories' comments were quantified by placing a cross on the spectrum. For example: in the diagram above, a pupil may have selected one aspect as the most interesting part of the lesson but only awarded it a '3/10'. This indicates that the child was generally disengaged and his nomination in this section was merely in comparison to other aspects of the lesson he found even less interesting. In contrast a '9/10' would inform me there was genuine interest in the activity.

**RESILIENCE self-assessment**  
*(Lifelong learning: being ready, willing and able to lock on to learning, accept getting stuck and work through it)*

Most interesting moment (s)?  
 <1.....5.....10>

Moments when I was not engaged/not interested/bored?  
 <1.....5.....10>

Most confident moment?  
 <1.....5.....10>

Most puzzling (confusing) task/instruction? (didn't get it/ felt stuck)  
 <1.....5.....10>

What might have I done/ organised differently to improve my learning?  
 <1.....5.....10>

Diagram 6.30

Each pupil's statement was then typed up and categorised. The results were shared with pupils the following lesson. I utilised *speech to text* software to ensure this was done efficiently. Early

findings revealed that whilst some students highlighted certain tasks as their preference, other classmates in the same room expressed their indifference or even aversion. Analysis confirmed for me that even an extensively prepared lesson plan is unlikely to meet all needs, particularly if delivered through prescription. In this instance, offering an exemplar to qualify a box and speech bubble in Diagram 6.29 above, 21 pupils selected the script questions to be the least interesting part of the lesson, and 15 said they found it confusing and felt stuck. I had highlighted 'script questions' in red before receiving the pupils' comments to indicate my evaluation that this aspect of the lesson did not appear to be successful. The 'story' and 'slides' were affirmed as the most positive part of the lesson. Joint analysis also served to clarify to the pupils that it was their responsibility for finding ways to best access learning for themselves from the choices afforded them. The exercise affirmed the power of listening (Shultz 2003; Heshusius 1995).

#### **6.9.3.2: Objective observation XMTT**

Diagram 6.31 (below) was recorded in response to a request from a colleague to observe a 'very disruptive group'.

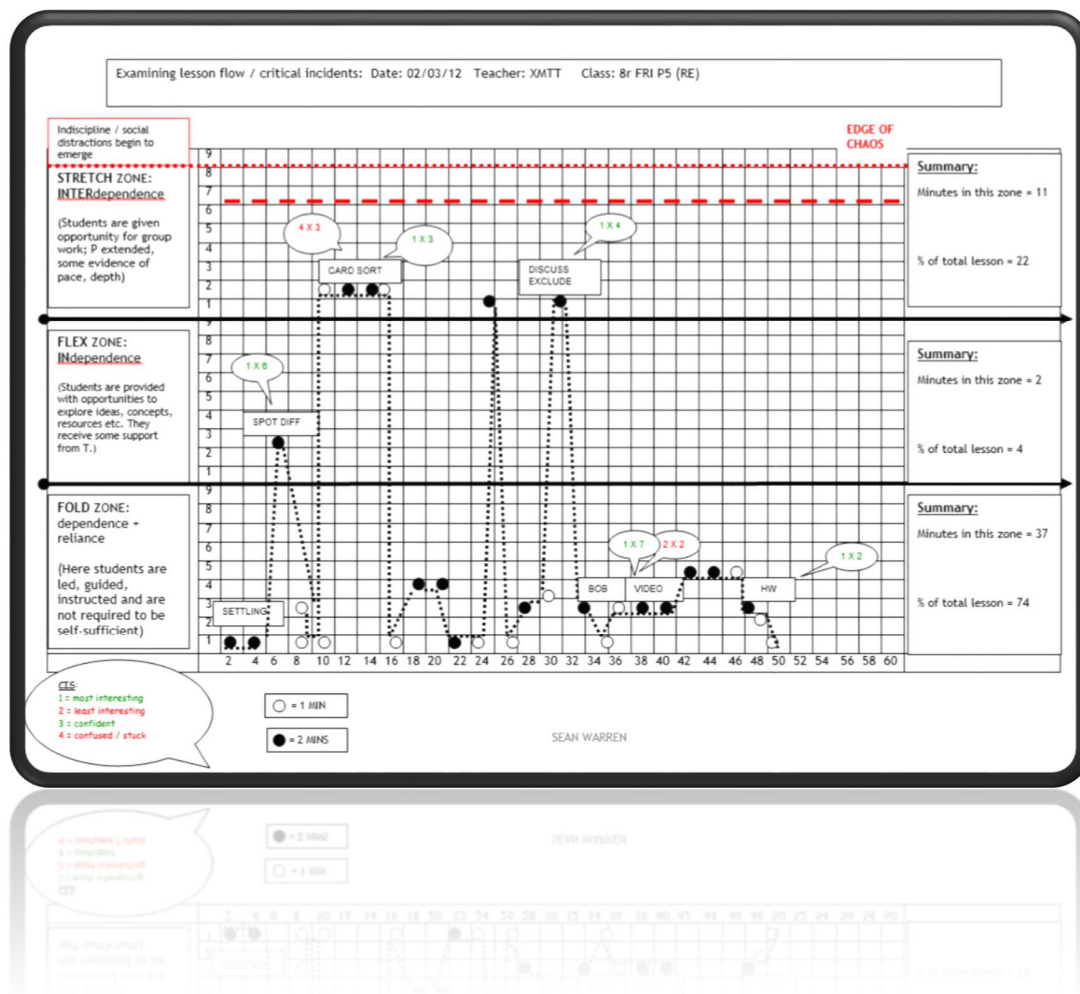


Diagram 6.31

Post observation, the teacher's instant realisation of the amount of time spent in Fold (74%), revealed to him that his lack of trust in the group was a contributory factor in the constant interruptions he was experiencing. Students' feedback suggested which types of activities might draw them to 'swim into the water'. The discrepancy between the content of a thorough lesson plan, which had been approved by his Head of Department, and the experiential delivery became self-evident for this teacher. In order to maximise insight Dewey (1933: p.275) advised the practitioner to probe beyond the visual so to respond in the moment:

"The teacher must be alive to all forms of bodily expression of mental condition—to puzzlement, boredom, mastery, the dawn of an idea, feigned attention, tendency to show off, to dominate discussion because of egotism, etc.—as well as sensitive to the

meaning of all expression in words. He must be aware not only of their meaning, but of *their* meaning as indicative of the state of mind of the pupil, his degree of observation and comprehension” (original emphasis).

### 6.9.3.3: Capturing the Edge of Chaos

Diagram 6.32's data (below) was logged onto an early prototype and has since been plotted onto this evolving template.

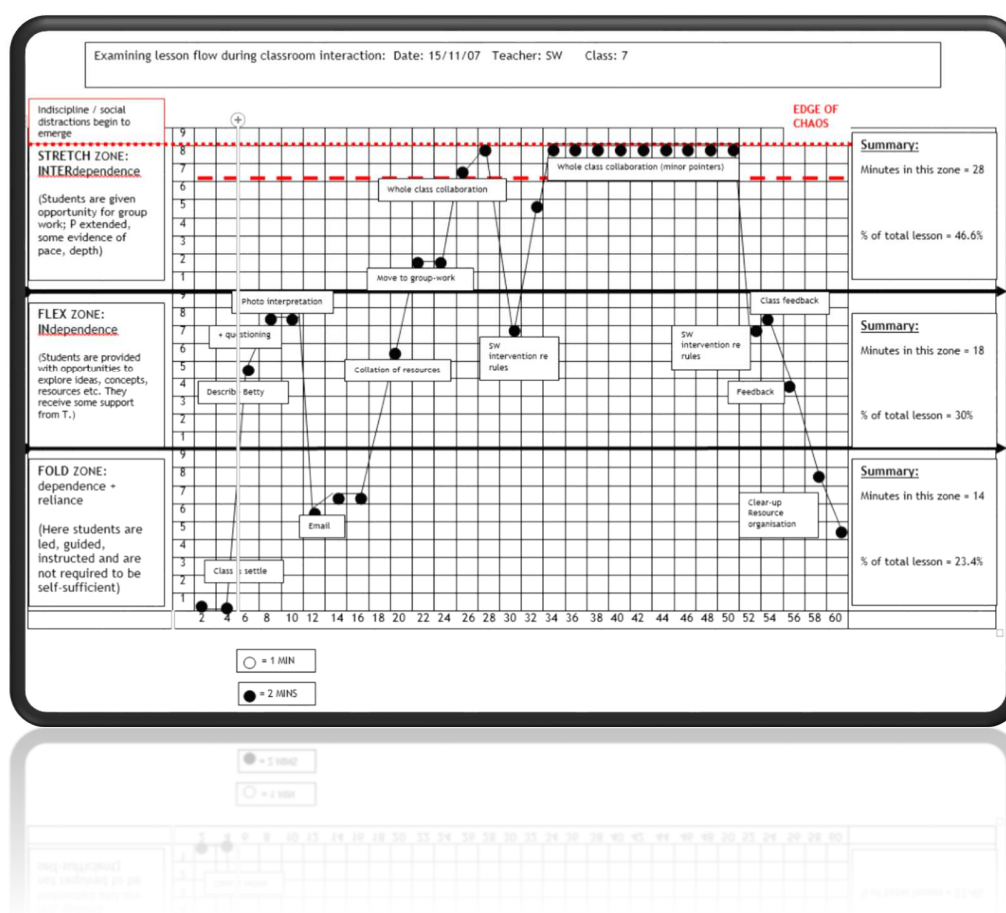


Diagram 6.32

The observation came from a colleague who was experimenting with a way of recording different levels of challenge. It shows periodic Fold and Flex preparation with the group before introducing opportunities for Stretch around 21 minutes into the lesson. Intervention on 30 minutes indicates that I sensed the emerging patterns were not conducive to quality learning.

16 minutes operating at the Edge of Chaos then ensues before the class is brought back to a calm place to disseminate findings and then to pack away. A video clip captures this collective learning state or synergy, of the type described by Hackman (1987) in which the group's energy and effectiveness is apparent as they became absorbed in the task (Claxton 2002). It condenses the last 30 minutes of a one hour lesson into 9 minutes (see accompanying device). It shows a Year 7 class organised into six colour groups engaging in conjunction tasks which are divisible, requiring inputs from all members (Steiner 1972). The groups are competing against each other as well as the clock which combine to minimise 'social loafing' (Williams et al. 1981) or reduction in effort. The lesson is orchestrated by my Trainee Teacher. As Rodgers & Raider-Roth (2006: p.271) advised:

"Attention is not only on the learner but also simultaneously on the group, the environment(s) in which they all work, the directions in which the individual and group might go next, the variegated terrain of the subject matter(s) at hand".

In a large-scale survey, Opdenakker & Van Damme (2006) found that the relationship between teachers and pupils was positively influenced by the extent to which the teacher adopted a learner-centred teaching style. This style was associated with increased opportunities to learn, better integration of students within classes, and increased student participation. In accordance, four Year 7 classes were asked through questionnaires:

*How do you feel about the way we learn the subject - do you like the open challenges or do you prefer to be told exactly what to do and led to do it? (N: 106)* (References for selected data are in Appendix 6B).

The vast majority affirm their preference for 'open challenges'. A selection represent rationale with common and affirmative terms (emphasis added):

“Yes because we have **fun** but we learn a lot as well. It is very clever; I like to be left to do the task; I like the open challenges because he **trusts** us to make the right decisions whilst other teachers don’t; I love that he lets us choose and lets us have **responsibility**; he tells us then we get on **independently**; Open challenges and choices most of the time I prefer but sometimes need to be told exactly”.

As with previous data exploring relationships, there remained a minority whose comments challenged the consensus and reminded me of the reality when diverse individuals gather as a group in a classroom:

“I hate RE and do not see the point of learning it; the lessons are taught well and he makes it fun but I don’t tend to learn much” (Y7TUES210/11M5).

#### **6.10: Observation judgements**

During the research period from September 2008-July 2011 eight internal observations were conducted by my Head of Faculty. I was intent on finding out whether my decisions to move away from authoritarian relationships, and subsequently, directive methods of teaching would meet criteria deeming teaching and learning to be Grade 1 – ‘Outstanding’. Evidence shows all eight Performance Management evaluations elicited a Grade 1. Detailed notes from each of the observation sheets is located in Appendix 6I. Each observation contains two sides.

#### **6.11: Answering the research question**

At the beginning of this study I asked the question: *Can non-authoritarian teachers contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils?*

Here I submit summative evidence that firstly, I did move from an authoritarian stance to a relational approach; and secondly, that it was integral in generating the desired outcomes. I sought to ascertain whether I could support my assertions that my relational approach to pupils

had changed. I conducted a question depicting the attributes of 5 fictional teachers. Each contained elements I recognise in myself. 'A' was descriptive of my former traits, B and C contained one element I would attribute to myself, 'D' was my description of current self when tired or under pressure; 'E' is how I would hope to describe myself now. To ensure the pupils were not led or influenced I inserted an image or silhouette of a teacher above each category. D and E were both women (as was B).






<p>Think of the times I have taught you. Recall your experience of me, your time in my classroom and our lessons together. Now consider the different characteristics below. Quickly look at the descriptors and place either a tick / question mark /cross next to each to indicate whether you feel I tend to have that trait. Some traits will be in several columns. When you are done answer the question beneath the descriptors.</p>				
				
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<p>Is strict and can be unfair. Will shout to get 'control' but often just has to 'look'. Can be disrespectful if crossed. Expects you to comply with whatever is asked. Teaches their subject well.</p>	<p>Tries to be strict &amp; shouts over the class a lot. Can become cross very quickly and then goes back to normal. Some students seem to 'get away with it'. Can teach their subject well. Sometimes it is clear good teaching and learning is not taking place</p>	<p>Is kind <u>but</u> has no real authority. Is calm &amp; self-controlled. Is respectful, helpful and friendly <u>but</u> can be seen as 'weak'. Can teach their subject well if class allow.</p>	<p>Has strong authority. Can be fun but is liable to change quickly if students cross him. Mood determines whether teacher calmly corrects you or else challenges and makes an example of you. Expects compliance and will use the 'C' system. Teaches their subject well.</p>	<p>Is fair and consistent with authority Is self-controlled and respectful, hardly ever raising his voice. Encourages students to make the right choices. Calmly follows through with consequences if they don't. Hardly ever uses the 'C' system unless appropriate. Seems to enjoy teaching the group Teaches their subject well.</p>

Table 6.3

Participants were asked to share 100 per cent between the five descriptors. 0% was a valid choice. Therefore the resultant percentages represent degrees of each attribute observed, rather than depicting pupils who identified wholly with individual choices. Results affirm 'teachers' D & E as most prominent.

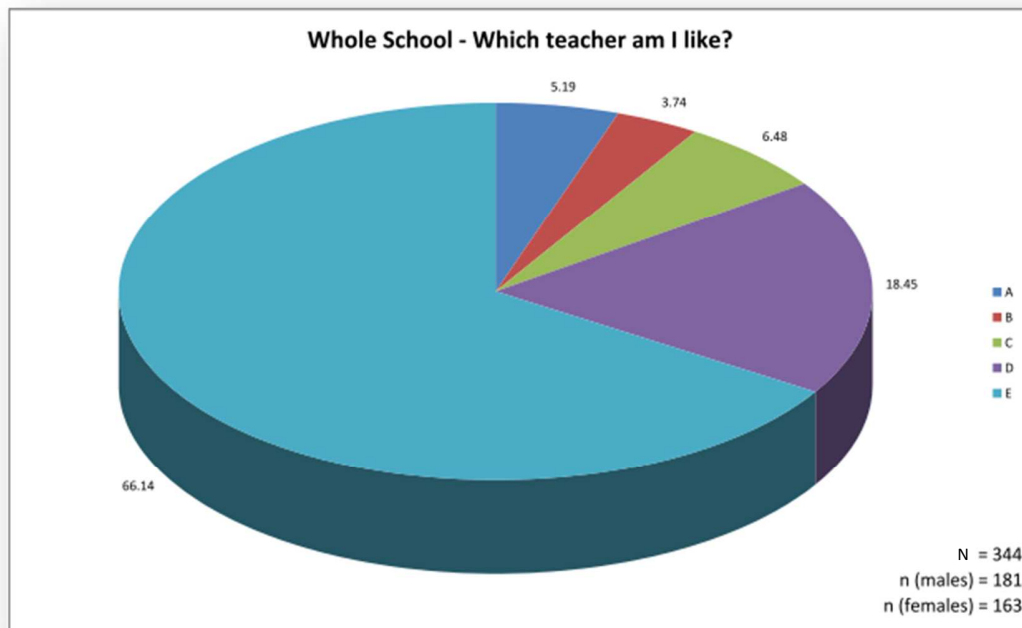


Diagram 6.33

A breakdown of each Year group (Appendix 6J) and individual class scores are in Appendix 6K. Most significant is the data from the solitary Year 8 group (below). I had taught the class more than any other group (twice a week in Year 7 and throughout Year 8). Every one of the 30 pupils independently allocated their top percentage to category E.



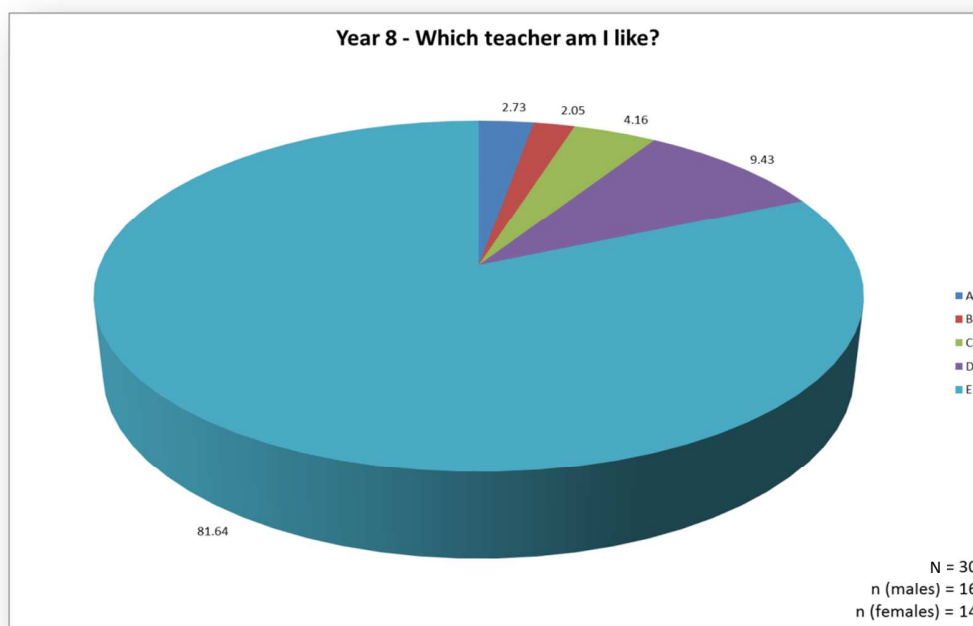


Diagram 6.34

Responses to the question overwhelmingly support my claims that my performance has changed and been progressively consistent throughout the research period. I use amalgamated comments from the Year 8 group as representative of the core. Again, the references are in Appendix 6B:

“Has been the same, I have more respect [for] him now than at the start; he has become more relaxed and gives us more freedom; [he] has become less harsh and more trusting over the years; you trust us more now and know what we struggle with. We know your expectations and try to live up to them; We’ve changed toward sir, we respect him more; I have changed to sir because he is more friendly now than two years ago; You have become more fun to be with... I have changed, maybe more open; we have grown to respect you and we see you as a friend”.

The qualifying statements also include comments from those pupils who had known me longest and therefore best placed to remark on whether I have changed. I select two Y10s as representative:

“You have changed because you used to be quite mean but now you’re funny and you are hardly ever strict; I will be honest up until this year I absolutely hated you, I think you probably hated me too, but now I think you’re ace! You treat us with respect and you are an amazing teacher”.

### 6.11.1: Weather comparisons

Diagram 6.35 & Table 6.4 (both below) affirmed that collectively, pupils’ responded positively to my relational and pedagogical approaches. Scores indicate that there was order for 94.54% of the time, (a positive difference of more than 20% on students’ estimated conduct around school), with over 15% greater cooperation defining their expression of self-control. This suggests, using Whitehead’s (2009) definition stated in 3.3.2, that pupils’ learning in my lessons is more likely to be educational. In addition, students are three times less likely to disrupt than when in other lessons. These quantitative results compliment comparisons pupils made between their typical conduct in other classes, and behaviour in my lessons (as qualified in Chapters Five and Six). Combined, these suggest my work contributes positively towards the school’s culture, increases pupils’ sense of well-being, and optimises conditions for learning. A breakdown of the Year group totals and individual Class data is in Appendices 6L & 6M.

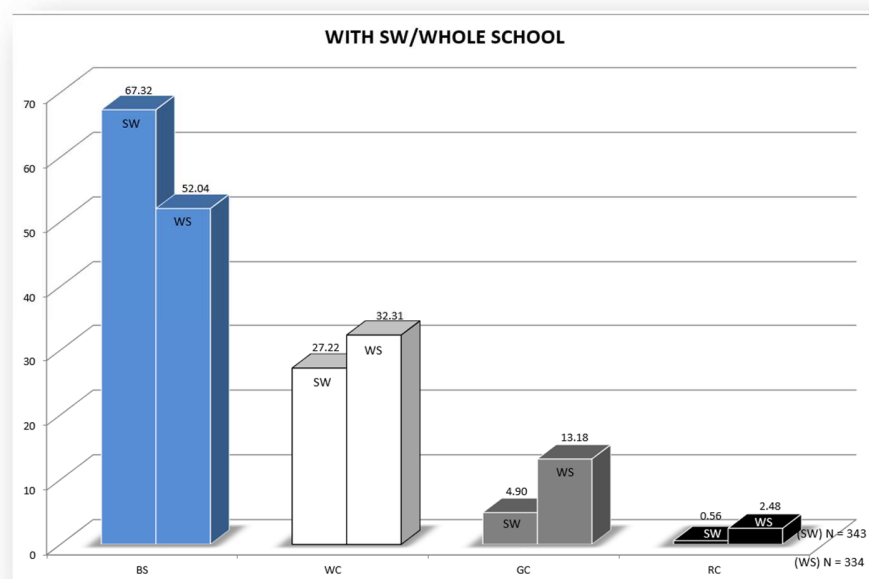


Diagram 6.35

Optimum outcomes for my lessons are identified on the top row (below):

		<u>Greater</u> cooperation (Blue Skies)	<u>Less</u> time unmotivated (White Clouds)	<u>Less</u> low level disruption (Grey Clouds)	<u>Less</u> wilful disruption (Rain Clouds)
Overall	(Diagram 6.35)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Year Groups 10/9/8/7		Yes Yes Yes Yes	Yes Yes Yes Yes	Yes Yes Yes Yes	Yes Yes Yes Yes
2 Y10 Classes	} (Y10 Fri P5)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	No (3% more WC big differentiation – 18% more females)	Yes	Yes
5 Y9 Classes	} (Y9 Mon P2)  (Y9 Thurs P3)  (Y9 Thurs P3 Feb 2010)	Yes	No (7% more WC – 23% more males than females selected this category)	Yes	Yes
		Yes	No (10% more WC – 23% more males contributed to this statistic)	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	No (3% more GC)	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1 Y8 Class	} (Y8 Mon P2)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6 Y7 Classes	} (Y7 Fri P2)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Yes	No (0.73% WC)	Yes	Yes

Table 6.4

An analysis of responses according to gender (below) show a consistency between males and females in displaying these affirmative categorised conditions. Boys showed gains in cooperation when compared to their whole school performance, whilst girls also recorded significant improvements in terms of greater cooperation and a decrease in attention-seeking behaviour. Appendix 6N breaks down gender to class responses in my lessons. This provides a rich data source that may benefit from analysis as a part of future research. I have used colours traditionally associated with the genders for ease of communication.

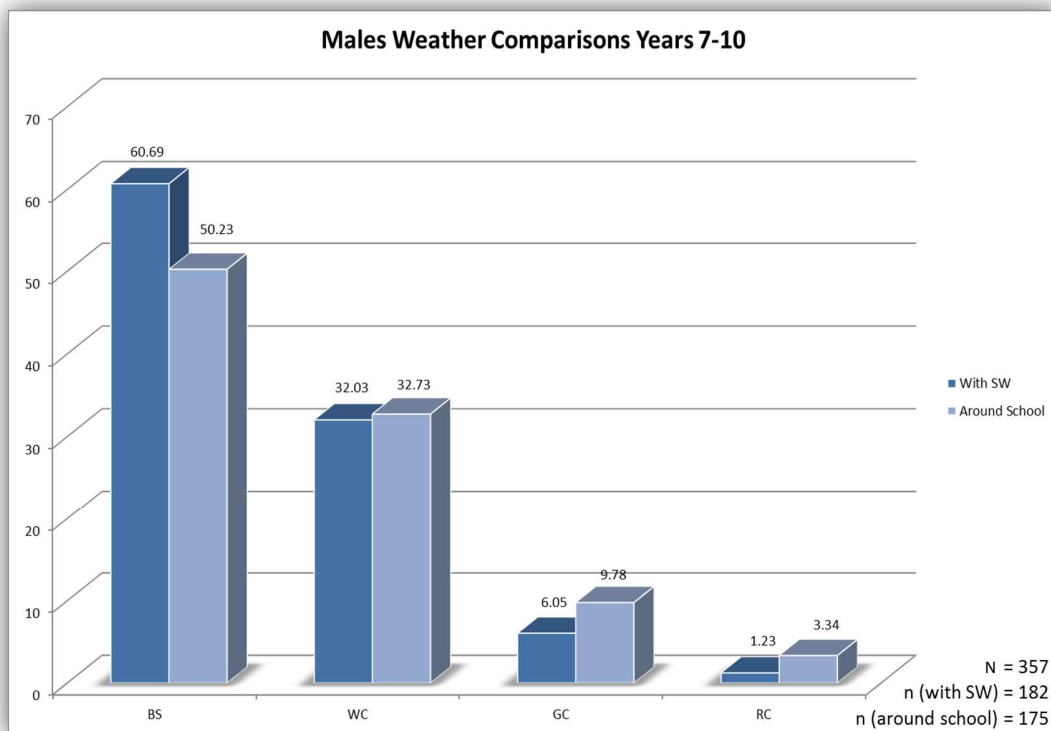


Diagram 6.36

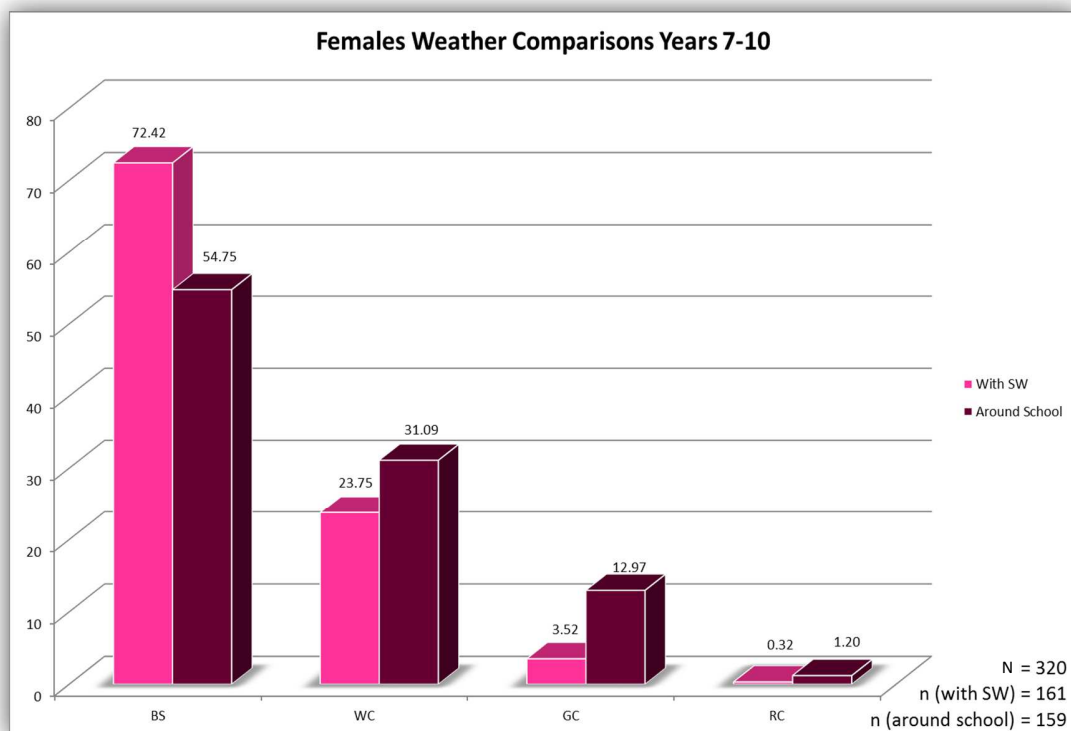


Diagram 6.37

The cumulative data indicates that a non-authoritarian approach can contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils, whilst acknowledging such gatherings remain unpredictable. I believe that the process of deciphering the class entity has acted to expose and diffuse sources of undefined anxiety (Ahmed 2004). I have progressively amended my psychological default position which sought, in accordance to institutional norms, to uncritically instil order. I came to ponder the question: “what is the goal of education?” I concur with Ginott (1972: p.10) who concluded:

“When all is said and done, we want children to grow up to be decent human beings, a ‘mensch’, a person with compassion, commitment, and caring... [in seeking to humanize I recognize that] the process is the method, that the ends do not justify the means, and that in our attempt to get children to behave in a way that is conducive to learning, we do not damage them psychologically”.

My action research has interrogated my role as an authority figure and as an educator. In accordance with the values which exist as my standards of judgement (see 3.4) I can claim evidence that I have demonstrated:

- Respect (through transactions)
- Fairness (through using appropriate authority)
- Responsibility (for my reactions)
- Trust (to enable opportunities for pupils to be independent and interdependent).

I argue these represent an improvement in my practice and effectiveness, and provide evidence that a non-authoritarian approach can contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils. In the concluding chapter I will reflect on the limitations of my work and highlight future research interests. I will then summarise my main findings to restate my original contribution to knowledge. In particular, I will produce evidence which suggests that my research might be useful for other teachers facing the issues I have addressed.

## **Chapter Seven:**

### **7.1: Conclusion**

This study has considered whether non-authoritarian teachers can contribute towards a well-ordered class of self-disciplined pupils. I have used my own practice to address this question. A comparison between my former authoritarian stance, and the relational approach I progressively sought to adopt, has been shown. I have charted the process I undertook and the difficulties I encountered. I scrutinized experiences from my past to rationalise the aspects of my contemporary performance I found problematic. Results and analysis confirmed that classroom behaviour is adaptive, contextual, and is influenced by a number of variables which affect the group dynamic. I critiqued the nature of both order and disruption. My data confirmed that obstructive behaviour occurs most frequently through low level disruptions. Within this complexity, the study suggests that the key determinant affecting the nature of classroom climate appears to be the teacher; in particular whether s/he is recognised and accepted by pupils as an appropriate authority figure. The study shows students' perceptions are informed by a combination of status, relationship, experience, and situational cues.

### **7.2: Review of methodology and research – limitations and future research interests**

The use of a comprehensive questionnaire at the end of each class' course produced an array of data which contributed to several different aspects of inquiry. As previously stipulated, the results were affected by absent individual pupils, and the omission of two key classes due to unscheduled whole school events. This might have added perspective to coverage of problematic incidents I presented in 6.6.2 and 6.6.3. Coded detention data prevented me from analysing the selected students' whole school behaviour. My coverage might have been further informed if I had analysed their school reports. The intensity of the situations rendered interviews to be inappropriate. However, I have since had the opportunity to informally review the episodes with SG and NG2 from 6.6.3. Now eighteen years of age, both hold respectable jobs and were friendly towards me. They acknowledged the unreasonableness of their previous behaviour. In the words of SG, she described herself as "a right cow"! The encounters served to remind me that pupils are just passing through the system and I merely shared a period of time

with them. Though recognising my propensity to absorb difficult memories, I refuse to be defined by such incidents, and commit to retaining them objectively as valuable learning experiences.

The decisions to create questionnaires to investigate emergent issues, produced insights of variables which were not originally considered. Some of the small sample sizes limit the generalizability of findings, while representing promising lines of inquiry for future research. Additional themes, such as the relevance of the time of day, gender, and the provision for Gypsy Travellers in mainstream schooling were outside of the parameters of this study, although generated data also invites opportunities for further research. The identification of pupils' socio-economic status and/or Special Educational Needs was not apparent in data, and might have contributed to literature I cited (see 2.2 and 2.4 specifically) which made an association between these variables and disruptive behaviour. This sensitive information was limited by access and was not stipulated in my original agreement with the school.

My coverage of Trainee Teachers (5.10 & 5.10.1) with two specific classes was limited to pupils' perspectives, and observations from myself and the Head of Faculty. Attaining the views of the Trainees would have added another dimension to the coverage. This was not considered due to them leaving the school, and the retrospective decision to explore this avenue of inquiry.

The sociometric data was confined to diagrams and subsequent observation. Due to the questionnaire replies being anonymous (aside from the option for pupil's to record their name in pilots), I was unable to match socio data with individual responses, so to build pupil perspectives. Because of the confidential nature of the survey, I considered it unethical to probe further through interviews.

The effectiveness of the pedagogical exchange outlined in 6.9 was supported by pupils' evaluations and Performance Management observations. My specific focus on 'complexity flow' correlates with the last two observations in Appendix 6I. However, future work could use pupils' pre and post grades to evaluate whether the approach also impacts positively on attainment. Cordingley (2009: p.9) suggested that the emphasis is integral to effective Professional Development, and compliments other aspects of my study, stating:



“CPD programmes where there is evidence of changing teachers practice *and* of improved pupil learning involve a combination of complex processes that support teachers in making their beliefs, ideas and practices explicit” (original emphasis).

The potential to use my research findings to contribute to teachers’ CPD is considered below in 7.5.

### **7.3: Summary of findings – pupils’ collective emergent behaviour is distinctly receptive to contextual cues**

Chapter Five invited exploration of the assumptions encapsulated by general descriptors of *majority* and *minority* (Steer 2005). I challenged polarised conceptions of indiscipline (Araújo 2005). I agreed with Furlong (1984) who emphasised that individual pupils, both ‘deviant’ and ‘conformist’ may behave differently in diverse contexts. Woods (1979) did not fully explain why students adopted one particular adaption rather than another. I illuminated the contextual nuances to address this limitation. As with the ‘naughty’ child, I showed the ‘ideal’ pupil (Hempel-Jorgensen 2009) was immersed within competing and contradictory discourses and micro-practices of power. My data was demonstrative of Foucault’s (1980) description of disciplinary power as circulating within the minutiae of practices inside schools; mobile and contingent, it includes the possibility of resistance (Youdell 2011). I showed that this can be through passive non-participation (Jonasson 2011) as well as more active forms of disruption. Data suggested pupil subversion placed accountability on the individual teacher’s inability to administer control (Verkuyten 2002). My work confirmed these incidents of testing and challenging boundaries are not confined to males (Myhill 2002; Jackson 2006; Charlton’s 2007). Detailed summative data is recorded in section 5.12.

In accordance with McCready & Soloway (2010), I developed context-specific strategies for classroom management. My approach derived from a gradual reconceptualization of disruptive behaviour. Aside from literature which advanced the notion of anti-structure (Bigger 2009a), I was greatly influenced by reflexive childhood memories in which I reconceived school as a sanctuary or “‘space’ where students can ‘safely’ test and challenge the values of their society” (Anfara 1999: p.3).

The purpose of my introspection was to become more consistent in leading the dynamic process towards pupil self-governance which Turner called *processual* (Bigger forthcoming). I devised and carried out alternative approaches to pedagogy which avoided authoritarianism and allowed pupils to have greater ownership, agency, voice, and creativity within the context of respectful teacher-pupil relationships. I engaged with McDaniel (1989: p.81) who asked the questions at the core of my study: “Are their choices real choices or contrived ones? Am I more interested in power and control or with helping students towards self-discipline?” I took seriously a belief that it is a moral/ethical imperative that good school relationships should model positive life relationships.

#### **7.4: Summary of findings – sustained teacher change is achievable**

My contribution to knowledge critiqued the prominence of behaviourism, its emphasis on ‘control’, and primarily its pervading impact on the psyche and practice of teachers. My work supported Unal & Unal’s (2009) suggestion that experienced teachers preferred to be more controlling. I cited interpretations of responsibility, derived from promotions, as significant in affirming my state. I showed, that in my case, authoritarianism had become my psychological default setting (Porter 2006). The uncomfortable process of transformation, and the portrayal of a psychological void left by a lifetime’s adherence to dominance, rendered the behaviour management courses I previously delivered as inadequate for maintaining change.

My research interrogated the incongruity within my mental state (Argyris & Schon 1975) and recognised my susceptibility to project a public self-image to colleagues, which was sometimes at odds with my practice within the confines of the classroom. Brown & Levinson (1987) referred to this as ‘face’. In accordance with Payne-Woolridge’s (2010) work, my positive enhancements to face tended to relate more to task than to behaviour issues; I had come to consider the former to be accidental, and equated the latter with deliberate acts. I acknowledged a gap between my hypothetical knowledge of authoritative behaviour techniques, and my application of this knowledge to classroom situations (Almog & Shechtman 2007). Instead, especially when under pressure, I tended to revert to dominance and emotional reactions. Wright (2009) referred to ‘split-self’ to cope with conflict, whilst Whitehead (1989)

invited exploration of the possibility that I was operating as a 'living contradiction'. As my causal attributions to misbehaviour centred on blame, this impacted on my emotional and cognitive responses, and in turn, the disciplinary approach I adopted (Poulou & Norwich 2002). Specifically, it formed my identity as a leader (Lührmann & Eberl 2007).

My study offers a contribution to knowledge answering the question: 'Where do teacher explanations come from?' Shulman (1986) referred to this as 'the missing paradigm' in the research on teaching. My study recognises the influence of both the macro and the micro to my operational state (Schostak 2002) at the meso level, as I studied interactions within groups in a school setting. I acknowledge Berlak & Berlak's (1981) claim that the inherent contradictions and dilemmas within schooling processes are in a state of constant flux, which are internalised by the teacher. I extend these.

The literature review critiqued the political interests which influence school life. Chapter Four showed that the localised school culture had a powerful influence on affirming my beliefs and practice (Fang 1996). Subsequently, I engaged critically with the cognitive and emotional 'self' (Woods & Carlyle 2002), detailing the process by which I strove to negotiate between positive and negative emotions, so to learn the most effective strategies for me to use in order to manage emotions. Congruent with TIFF methodology and Sutton et al.'s (2009) findings, I felt much more confident in discipline matters through communicating my positive emotions, rather than trying to quell negative emotions. In addition, my work addressed a clear limitation of Canter & Canter's (1992) Assertive Discipline approach, which generally omits comment on the importance of the pedagogical experience to ensuing behaviour (Swinson & Cording 2002).

In accordance with key themes within literature, the concepts of 'presence' (Buber 1937/58), authenticity (Palmer 1997), and trust (Gregory & Ripski 2010) emerged as foundations for authority. These were achieved through a commitment to personal values, which encompassed elements of both control and care (Temple 2002a).

### 7.5: Potential for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

A potentially significant factor in evaluating the validity of my research is that effects might be interpreted as indicative of my specific status, abilities, and persona. Beyond my personal engagement, I sought to offer a change of classroom dynamics so to make a potential positive contribution to shaping the whole school culture. Thus I subjected aspects of my work to inform colleagues' CPD and used opportunities to contribute to teachers' initial training.

In the third year of my research I worked alongside a male 'champion' and two female Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs); I then returned to the school to work with two other female NQTs. I considered all to be competent human beings, however, each had a specific 'problem class' which challenged their conventional approach and, in the NQTs' cases, left them without confidence. NQT1 and NQT2 had time off during the research period due to stress. Each of the teachers engaged to different degrees with individual research blogs I had set up and so contributed reams of data to accompany summative interviews, emails, and observations. The communications provide a rich source of material with the potential for further research. Here, I submit selected extracts which, together, illustrate their collective engagement with different aspects of my approach. Towards the end of the chapter I quote in full, so to do justice to the investment I made in these colleagues.

'Champion' (CH) inherited a 'difficult' Y11 class and was charged with ensuring they achieved their predicted grades. A very competent, and established teacher in his fourth year in the profession, he found the sociograms intriguing. In addition he said, "The whole weather thing put a label on my experience". CH also found Temple's (1992a) Four Model Link-up fascinating, especially Tuckman's (1965) 'Forming, Storming...' model, which provided assurance that the storming stage was typical and could be fleeting. *Manners* became CH's byword for expectations with his class. This was inexplicably a phrase I had overlooked throughout the duration of research. I believe it has potential to direct further research in examining classroom climate. A less successful aspect of my work with CH, was his consideration of literature explaining hegemony. I was very disappointed, as the symptoms he described (see 4.2.6)

suggested this concept would provide him with insight, however, he deemed the ideas to be too abstract for him to grasp.

NQT1 was in the same department as CH. He was her mentor and so I took a subsidiary role in which to administer support. NQT1 initially found the socio data of her Y10 Set 5 Maths group thought-provoking. However, her evaluative interview informed me that there was too much information for her to decipher and so limited impact. The insight prompted a change in my methodology as, subsequently, I analysed the data and fed snippets back via email so enabling colleagues to digest and prompt further inquiry.

NQT1 left the school at the end of her solitary year. I received an email in the first term of her work in a new school. It shows many of the strategies I have conveyed in this thesis are transferrable:

“In the first few weeks students tested me and at first I felt a bit out of my depth in establishing myself again when I had worked so hard to do that at XX. But I think a lot of the strategies I learnt from you have become more second nature so I think I have done a better job at establishing myself than I thought at the time...

Going back to last year, as you know I got so down about the year 10 class and ironically I have a difficult year 10 set 5 class again this year. The first few weeks were a bit of a struggle but I felt like I had lots of skills to use, and the main difference was that I didn't feel down about this class at all. I didn't dread lessons; I saw it as a challenge that I knew I would crack them eventually. I found out about the relationships in the class, made a more effective seating plan, was very careful about the way I worded what I said... now they are the most cooperative class I have! This week I carried out a survey with them on the *survey monkey* website to see what the students thought of my behaviour management skills. They all rated me as either good or excellent. I think if I had done the same survey with my last year's year 10 class they definitely would not have said that! I didn't do a survey with them because I thought I would be upset about what they thought about me. So my perspective has also changed in that way; I felt confident to find out what my new students think about me. They also commented on the relaxed

atmosphere and how they liked how we work together which is really good to hear as I always bear in mind that I am aiming for cooperation not control”.

NQT2 started her first year in teaching thinking “control is what I should be doing”. Yet she was also desperate to be liked by the students and consequently found pupils took advantage of her inconsistent approach. Her Y9 ‘problem’ class left her feeling “insignificant, worthless ... useless, vulnerable ... invisible”. Her conception of control changed during the two terms we worked together. “Instead of trying to control, or dominate everything they do; [I] concentrated on controlling the situation, to be aware, prepared for every eventuality”. In accordance with findings in 5.8.5, NQT2 sought to create the children’s experience of her by following everything up. I established clear avenues between her and her line managers to ensure instant communication of disruptive incidents and ensuing support. TIFF enabled her to find an ethical balance between structuring and nurturing as she re-established herself from a firm base. It is interesting to note that of the five colleagues mentioned in this chapter who completed a TIFF (NQT1 was not available), a correlation is apparent. Whilst the established ‘champion’s’ profile shows his scores for ‘care’ outweigh his scores for ‘control’, each of the others, still in the midst of dealing with a ‘problem’ class, recorded scores which show ‘control’ as significantly prominent over ‘care’. The results support Temple’s (2012b) assertion that TIFF does not measure ‘type’; it provides a unique ‘snapshot’ of present behaviour patterns.

NQT3’s engagement with TIFF was profound. Her email tells of an experience which resonates with mine:

“You were the first person who was actually asking questions about me as a person, a teacher with a soul. I thought I knew myself pretty well and I’d reflect my actions fairly well, but some bits of the TIFF feedback were very surprising to me, or maybe more of an eye-opener. I was slightly shocked at how much energy I was basically “wasting” and what sort of “dominating, controlling” strategies I tried in the challenging classes. Instead of “responding” I am/was “reacting”, and therefore functionally not very fluent☺. I realised that I could be the kind of teacher who I don’t want to be and who I never really liked myself when I was a student. At the same time it made me more

aware of my positive mode strengths which I should “celebrate” or those that I should use more of”.

Her colleague (NQT4) also engaged fully with many of the strategies. Their collective feedback was that they felt they could engage more fully in exploration of their mode scores because I had already invested time in them to win trust. This was achieved in part through my observation of them performing well with selected groups, rather than being seen struggling with their ‘problem’ classes. They considered, if I had started with TIFF, although conceptually interesting, they would have been more guarded in their responses.

An additional application for my study emerged unexpectedly in the third year of research. As stipulated in 5.10.1, I agreed to mentor a Trainee Teacher. Hallett (2010: p.435) advocated an examination of the pedagogical beliefs of teacher educators, insinuating incongruity, asking, “Do we practice what we preach?”

MTT, now in his first teaching post affirmed that many aspects of my work and approach have had a lasting impact on his performance as an authority figure:

“In my practice since leaving I have paid particular attention to your theory about preparedness, trying always to ensure that I am 'appropriately dressed' for the behaviour climate in my classroom. This was the area that most concerned me. Having been involved in youth work, building relationships never seems to be a problem but managing behaviour used to scare me. My confidence in dealing with behaviour issues has grown tremendously. Whilst we received some training at university, the sessions I had with you helped me to put things in perspective and I especially valued the comment you made regarding not being able to control the behaviours of others, rather we are only able to manage”.

And as an educator:

“My teaching has been completely changed. When I first started my training my feedback was quite often about a lack of creativity but that I had a good questioning

technique. Working under you, I was encouraged to take risks, to encourage students to 'go on a journey' towards independence and to develop these aspects by ensuring lessons have a good 'flow'. My initial training was all about working within a very rigid structure – starter, main activity (with some chunking) and a plenary without much thought of anything else – if these elements were in place that would be fine. However, you encouraged me to look at the 'flow' of the lesson – allowing students to experience episodes that were on 'the edge of chaos' and then bringing them back to reinforce the learning that they had experienced. This was initially a frightening thought because to an outsider (me to begin with) it was easy to view the session as being disorganised and there was also a feeling that 'the edge of chaos' was a place where some students could 'coast' or work to their own agendas. You showed me through some simple behaviour techniques how this could be avoided and that with the right stimulation students would use these episodes to push themselves and to develop their own independent learning skills. I have to say that on seeing your lessons for the first time, I was blown away and went home thinking I could never do this! You gave me the confidence to fight against these feelings and to really begin to give it a go.

In terms of my teaching now I would say that my confidence has grown beyond measure. Instead of having to have total control the whole time I now feel comfortable allowing students to be truly independent as I am able to look for the signs of engagement and progression. I have become aware of how I would dominate a session with unnecessary talking, thereby confusing students with too many instructions and things to think about. My instructions are now much sharper, more straightforward and this allows the students to grow in confidence because they know they can do things rather than having to rely on me to re-explain my complicated instructions.

...recently, an [Ofsted] inspector come in and he wanted to see me teach. I had no planned lessons that day so I volunteered to teach another person's class. I would not have done this before as I had never seen the class or had time to build up a rapport. His feedback to my training manager was that the lesson was Outstanding - a copy of their observation is attached!" (Appendix 7A).



I consider the common strand between myself and the six participants who contributed towards this study, is that we have all had our psychological and philosophical 'default settings' examined and challenged to various degrees. I am particularly interested to consider the potential of my work in Primary schools, where the contact between teacher and pupils is more constant. Regardless of educational phase, Radford (2008: p.144) pondering the features of closed and open systems (see 6.9.1) succinctly posed a query for consideration:

"The question for educational researchers [and teacher educators / teachers] is whether schools are more like clocks or clouds".

My work has raised concerns about a functionalist view of education, considered in 2.2, highlighting in particular the impact on the nature of classroom relationships. My thesis has shown that I embraced the notion that schools are complex and adaptive as I subscribed to and interpreted the latter metaphor to inform my contribution. My conclusion is encapsulated by a quotation by Haim Ginott:

"I have come to a frightening conclusion.

I am the decisive element in the classroom.

It is my personal approach that creates the climate.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal.

In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanized or de-humanized"

(Ginott 1972: p.13).

I have argued that through this study I have made a commitment to ensure these words become a reality in my classroom.

### **Postscript**

This postscript is written at the invitation of the examiners to give a reflective commentary on my work. I would like to thank the two examiners for a dialogue which was productive and helpful in clarifying my position. This reflective postscript takes stock of where I have arrived, and plans my future intellectual journey. It is organised around discussions initiated in the viva voce examination.

#### ***What benefits did the pupils receive by virtue of their involvement with this project?***

This raises broad ethical issues about mutuality. In a sense my action research focused on my professional teaching role, asking questions about how I could improve my practice. It is true that changing one's practice is not necessarily the same as improving it, so I informed the change through a library study of pedagogy, critical theory, school effectiveness, and educational psychology. There is some subtlety in my decision to stop being controlling whilst still establishing class control. Having accepted that I, the teacher could be a disruptive influence through causing and perhaps escalating conflict, I investigated alternative approaches. Without reactions against authoritarianism, I hoped that the pupils would become free to exercise self-control and self-discipline, and this was largely what happened.

Our class relationships were built on dialogue between equals, encouraging pupils to express themselves both in response to me as teacher and in response to their classmates. The benefit to them came from the opinion they communicated that this freedom of expression was unusual in school. They collectively judged their behaviour to be more cooperative and less disruptive in these lessons than in other classes. More so, I believe they experienced something approaching democracy. They were increasingly able to make choices about how they learned and who to work with. They were provided with a platform to comment anonymously on their experience: that some individuals chose to use this to criticise without fear of reprimand or reprisal is a privilege currently denied to my own children who regularly vent their frustration with school experiences upon arriving home. Hence, the likes of my children (the eldest of which was in the sole class in her Year group not to participate in this study) would have benefitted from involvement in a project such as mine. Within a safe psychological

environment her peers were appreciated for who they were as young people, and then encouraged, supported and respected for what they could do as learners.

***What were the circumstances of why the video of a lesson was made? Can this be given ethical clearance to be distributed with the thesis?***

The video was an unintended outcome of the research, and thereby unplanned in a research sense. An OFSTED inspector observed my lesson and graded it as (only) 'Good', a low grade in my opinion. Since this is a reflective commentary, let me say this caused deep anger, resentment and a sense of unfairness. In consequence I arranged for the same lesson to be taught the next day by a colleague to a different class (as was scheduled). This was videoed so that other people could express an opinion about the lesson (not of course about the teacher). This received the normal permissions for using video recordings in school. Viewings were intended for an audience of fellow teachers.

This lesson was regarded by others as being 'outstanding' as an example of pupils working purposefully and cooperatively. This included the school's OFSTED advisor who viewed the video oblivious to the official judgement it had incurred. I refrained from pursuing the Advisor's advice to lodge an official complaint. That it came at the end of my teaching career in which the last eleven years had procured exclusive Grade 1 judgements was galling. Arriving half way through the lesson, the inspector spent much of the 25 minutes engaged in his paperwork periodically interrupted to survey the students' exercise books. Although paperwork I had provided stated that the class were near the beginning of a new scheme of work and had been taught by the Trainee Teacher for the six weeks preceding the lesson, the inspector neglected to speak to me, my Trainee, or the pupils. The OFSTED criteria as applied by this inspector failed to recognise or acknowledge the outstanding practice going on, in which classmates collaborated and discussed points with each other.

The examiners requested that I obtain written permission from individuals and their parents so that the video could be included in the thesis and used for CPD thereafter. Therefore I contacted each of the 29 participants and their parents to seek permission to publish the video in the public domain. I was greatly assisted by the Headteacher and admin staff to contact and

administer a letter to all concerned. I arranged for all to have the opportunity to view the film in an adjacent room during a scheduled Parents' Evening. In addition a former colleague made himself available to show the video in his classroom during lunchtimes at school. Several of the pupils who are now in Year 11, and their parents took the opportunity to view images from four years previously, before giving their permission. Steps to ensure publication was ethical extended to tracking down two pupils who had left the school. Only one of the cohort of 29 withheld permission, preferring for her face not to be shown. She declined the invitation to view the video. As her appearances were fleeting I was able to cut her frames from the film without too much distortion.

***What was it that actually changed? You weren't an ogre before so the shift, change, however significant, was gradual. Can you articulate this subtlety?***

I had used the term 'emancipation' in my work in association with the concepts of improvement, effectiveness, and educational values. Although my intention was to extend this quality to my pupils, in truth, I had first to experience it for myself. My reading of Critical Theory left me feeling as though I had been 'had', that the pedagogical 'wisdom' handed down to me throughout my development as teacher had been fundamentally flawed. I had spent a career establishing a reputation for excellence using criteria which had neither been securely grounded nor reflected on. By being labelled 'best practice' it had become unassailable. Behaviourist at heart, it controlled by rewards and punishments; but in doing so its authoritarian stance created conflict especially with uncooperative pupils. Forceful class control was instilled into developing teachers as the only way to be in charge. This made me feel like a puppet dancing to someone else's tune – a sheriff or 'hired gun'. As I state at the end of Chapter Four, this led to an un-reflected assumption that the persons (both pupils and adults) involved in school were pawns in a game of power which was validated and expected by institutional education. Escaping from that was to represent my professional shift in philosophy.

My experience of personal emancipation was equally as significant. During the research period I physically re-visited all the significant sites from my childhood. I went my old primary school

and was taken back in an instant by the still familiar smells; I wandered through my old secondary school, disoriented by the low ceilings due to its conversion to up-market flats. I experienced something akin to a spiritual happening as I eventually stumbled upon the old school staircase which had been preserved. Here I stood quietly for a good while in the company of the very bricks who were witness to my life as I passed this way decades before. Later I stood on the rubble of the derelict estate which was once my home and then I returned to places I had re-visited many times in my thoughts and dreams. Standing on the sites which housed my experiences of being a victim in the face of older, stronger kids, I comforted the young Sean. Now a strong, competent man, I audibly spoke to the frightened child I knew in some capacity still existed, and assured him that all would be and did turn out 'ok'. There was no longer any need to fear, if any of those bullies were ever somehow to return I would be more than capable of dealing with them. More significantly from a professional point of view, the experiential learning coming from being bullied, that survival requires physical and psychological strength and forcefulness in the face of conflict, had been brought into the open for re-examination. Thankfully I also managed to visit my old boxing club before it ceased to be and smelt the unmistakably leather of the gloves; the ring was empty and the building erringly silent, the crowds I remembered had long dispersed. In essence, through the reflexive activities afforded by my research I experienced healing and received a release. Combined, the acquisition of critical consciousness and self-awareness enabled me to expose the foundations of this phrase 'living contradiction' so enabling me to address its manifestations entrenched in my persona as an authority figure.

***Control: final thoughts on control as an ambiguous concept***

Teacher guides on becoming an effective teacher emphasis class control. In general it means that pupils are 'in line', working without disruption and brought back into line when they stray. This presents teaching as a shepherding job, or maybe a shepherd-dog sort of job. I initially considered 'control' to be *good*; then I became suspicious of it and assumed it to be *bad*, *because I was being controlling*. The *Temple Index of Functional Fluency* (TIFF) taught me that control is value free. It is only when it is enacted through behaviour does it take on the capacity to cause others (and ourselves) either to benefit or suffer. I learned that its positive

contribution comes through structuring rather than dominating and that it must strike a balance with ethical care. Situations and circumstances may cause control or care to take prominence on occasion, but essentially for authoritative adults the two co-exist in a general state of equipoise. I made a commitment to this and increasingly recognised the signs indicating that I was in need of re-balancing.

This demands a revisiting of the national policy agenda of class control. Control is ambiguous: a controlled class is not the same as a class under control by a controlling central figure making (as the infamous book title suggests) “the buggers behave”. Control comes from within the teacher and within the pupils, in harmony. If either one or the other dominates, then dysfunction results. According to a recent Ofsted report (2014) cited below, in our typical classrooms, dysfunction is the norm. I have attempted to achieve on a regular basis a classroom in balance, that is, a eufunctional class.

***Can you attempt a generalisation of pedagogy? Can other teachers replicate it? Can you offer guidance? Are classes and the learning within them disrupted by teachers?***

My research was restricted to action research in one school but its implications have been discussed and shared more widely. Feelings of dissatisfaction with school systems is clearly broader than just my own personal view, as other colleagues have expressed a desire to have better relationships with their classes. The problem is that it is not easy for teachers to break out of the group-think they are in, as indeed I also did not. My own journey required a degree of stubbornness particularly with comments like ‘Why change a strategy that worked?’ Others attempting to replicate my work would need something of my philosophical journey to resist those moments of exasperation which drives a teacher to replicate (or as Bourdieu might have said, reproduce) the authoritarian tactics that they themselves experienced when pupils in school.

Thus I can only offer tentative generalisation for my work. This is the nature of qualitative research (Denzin 2009). On one level my own journey is unique, although I hope the principles, processes and tools, and more so my conviction not to blindly contribute to an unethical status quo might encourage others to tread the same path. I am particularly mindful of staff of my

generation (trained in late 1980s) and wonder if even the consideration of a 'different' way is far too inconvenient amidst the culture and status which reaffirms itself on a daily basis. However, I have learned that such hope is not folly for my work acted to articulate the experiences of key critical friends. I am also encouraged that my research colleagues, documented in Chapter Seven, offer evidence that even without a commitment to a philosophical re-think, aspects of my approach enhanced their capacity to be effective teachers so the pupils might benefit. My work offers no simplistic answers, and that was never my explicit intention. I would gain great satisfaction from the possibility that my project has at least made colleagues more aware of pertinent questions around order, power and ethics which rarely get asked.

A key new audience is the ranks of trainee teachers and NQTs who have inappropriate expectations of enforcing compliant behaviour. New teachers come into the profession with ideals, to help the young generation and pass their subject enthusiasms on. Many become demotivated by the assumption that only authoritarians are good teachers, and they leave the profession. Teacher retention is a key national concern. Convincing them that 'the reality' of good teaching is actually closely linked to their ideals, and giving them the skills to engage in relational dialogic teaching, is likely to reverse this trend, so it is politically significant to reconsider national behaviour policy.

### ***How schooling can be made more enjoyable and meaningful – and therefore effective?***

Lefstein & Snell's (2014) title 'Better Than Best Practice' serves to encapsulate the implicit argument I have been developing throughout this research period – that narrow specified criteria which defines best practice is regularly achieved whilst sustaining (and even perpetuating) the power divide within classrooms. I sought to probe beyond the learning processes to explore the dialogic possibilities which might enrich the interactions I experienced and witnessed.

There is richness inherent within the complexity and 'messiness' of teaching which a silent classroom misses. Dialogic pedagogy encourages open discussion and debate and is respectful and inclusive of the relational, of power, of identities, space and pedagogical tasks. Knowledge

and truth are constructed in discussion with others, so definitions can be teased out, misunderstandings challenged and dilemmas considered. This is a different form of learning than memorising information for examinations. Would this represent more effective education? What might be the effect on pupils who partake in this exchange? These are not simple questions. I am all too aware that for some pupils dependence provides a sense of security – an established recipe for attaining predicted grades. I have come to perceive their early experience of schooling as subtle, progressive indoctrination – the System can tolerate those who challenge and resist, even those who rebel, by imposing the blunt instrument that is inherent within uncontested authoritarian approaches. However, by in large the docile majority are accepting of their lot. It is akin to sitting in a jail in which the door is all the while unlocked.

However, aside from my professional interest, this research is also undeniably personal. I can't help but return to my compass – how do I want *my own children* to gain from their experience of education? I want them to leave school as capable, competent young adults who feel able to contribute positively to their community and to wider society. I want them to be critically aware as well as self-aware so not to be intimidated by others who are privileged due to inherent wealth, connections and power; nor be afraid of those who mask their insecurities at others' expense. I want them to have experienced democracy; to have developed their own voice and articulated it with skill and conviction (ideally in the face of injustice). Of course this is not the sole preserve of school and I recognise the responsibility for my wife and I to set the foundations. However, the System *demand*s my children's attendance and attention for the duration of their formative years, so this compulsion should be hedged with responsibilities on their part. So what type of education do my children need to experience in order to become equipped for a creative, contributing life? I became acutely aware of the diet of compliance and targets which has progressively diminished the irrepressible curiosity and energy my three children once had when they first moved from the nurtured environment of home to take their place on the first of numerous class lists. Yet, I sense in particular lessons, with specific teachers it periodically re-emerges – all is not lost. I recently witnessed genuine sadness when their music teacher (who had only been at the school for a short time) left at Christmas to take up a post in New Zealand. Engagement, interest, assurance are still possible for my children, and



millions like them, but seem to be subject to the whims of timetabling – the luck of the draw as to who you get allotted to on the first day back in September. My work encourages staff that they can be one of those precious teachers who my children gladly pledge allegiance to; those individuals who make a difference, who are significant in the lives of children who pass through the System and remember fondly when they look back.

### ***Reflect on growth in research competence***

This project represents my fourth degree, but my self-identification is as a teacher rather than an academic. I certainly do not feel inferior, as my insights come from years of classroom practice critically reflected on. Classroom practice and research have synergies which greatly enhance each. In my case, research helped me to break out of an insidious mind-set and seek positive resolution. Building learning relationships is regarded as a maverick style, like swimming against a rapid tide of authoritarian and behaviourist conformism.

A personal journey has to be autobiographical. Our history is what we tell ourselves, what we choose to believe about ourselves. Truth and delusion can get mixed up. Yes I was there, but I was trying to make sense of being there. This is a sobering reminder that we need to approach our life story critically. Thus, as I described in my preface, I engaged with others who had been part of my life story to offer other voices and perspectives as a form of validation to check, test and elicit insights which were obscured from me. The feedback enabled me to become more broadly aware. The capacity to observe, to listen, to be curious and to ask questions became second nature. The need to decipher and communicate complex terms and theories so to enhance my explanations rather than complicate them became apparent. The explicit requirements of ethical engagement within AR involving young people gave me an acute aware of the inherent power dynamics I took for granted on a daily basis. Research involves the systematic handling and analysis of complex observations and information: my research journey has required embracing complexity and challenging established mind-sets.

My literature review created a mountain of material, not all of which found its way into the thesis. Condensing material to meet the word limit needed, the examiners felt, more unpacking: my mental links are not necessarily clear to an outside reader (Bassey 1992). Having

reviewed his explanation and illustration of 'sandbagging', I acknowledge that some references sought to strengthen my argument; but how they do so sometimes needs clarifying.

### **Validation of autobiographical research**

The paradigm war between positivist and qualitative research (Denzin 2009 again) generated a prejudice against autobiography (the use of 'I') in research in some quarters. This prejudice has not disappeared, although the observing and selecting 'I' in so-called objective work is usually hidden beneath the surface. Nevertheless, validation of a personal perspective can be helpful. In evaluating claims for validation I reflect on two aspects: the process of personal validation, and social validation. Mindful that Polanyi (1958) wrote that I, as an individual, am justified in taking a decision to understand the world from my own, original point of view, I came to understand and accept the validity of my own claims for knowledge. This was affirmed by Whitehead & McNiff (2006) on the researcher's 'living I'. Assimilated from a life time of experience, I could argue that I *know this*, and despite an inability to instantly qualify, I could, on occasion, argue quite simply that *I know*. I have made efforts to articulate how seemingly instant decisions I made in the midst of interactions derived from complex developmental episodes, which I progressively brought into consciousness. My methodology was underpinned by living logics so to be inclusive of all forms of knowledge as I enabled my thoughts to accommodate the emergent, generative and transformative qualities inherent within my research. This mode of thought could be equally threatening as it was intoxicating as I learned to tolerate the unique demands of operating in the present; being "on the brink" (Whitehead & McNiff 2006: 40).

To convey this state to Critical Friends so to attain social validation for my claims necessitated me to reveal aspects which were previously hidden; to make myself vulnerable so my data could be read as *real*. This was not easy, for those who acted as my validation group only knew those aspects of personality and history I had divulged to them – even after many years. They knew the man; but they were not party to the making of the man, for we all wear masks. Submitting core values as standards of judgement enabled my Critical Friends to appreciate how my articulation of power, psychological and relational struggles sometimes resulted in my

values being denied, or at least compromised. I required my Critical Friends to validate the authenticity of my explanations for the enactment of my values in the midst of social practice.

Applying Habermas' (1987) social standards for truth claims, my Critical Friends firstly rendered my account to be comprehensible. From an academic perspective this was essential as I incessantly organised and readjusted content over the years to ensure my work was presented as complex rather than complicated. This was so readers could follow the thread, appreciating connections and recognising the justification for the holistic scope I advanced. My readers all contained two essential qualities which could, I argue, enhance their verdicts upon reading my work; these I realised in retrospect. Firstly, in respect of the question 'does my work represent a truthful and sincere account?' three of the main participants had known me for over 25 years and so could verify, to various degrees, my former attitude to effectiveness in the classroom. Their examination of the completed thesis acted to contextualised and crystallised the multiple conversations we had engaged in during the process. As one commented:

"The chapter [4] reflects very much the person I believe you once to be and the evolution that I albeit from a distance, have observed in recent times".

Secondly, in consideration of the appropriateness of my approach in terms of professional and ethical consideration (Hargog 2004), the readers all had extensive experience in education and were all parents (and in two cases, grandparents). Subsequently their affirmations gave me confidence as I subjected my claims to institutional validation that my work was fundamentally for the benefit, and not to the detriment of the young people I include.

### **Truth, genuineness and validation**

Although positivist research speaks of reliability and validity, their concern is whether experiments are repeatable and whether different experimenters would get similar results. In qualitative research, the same events cannot be observed again, and the same data will not be given by interviewees to another researcher. The event of the first interview will have prompted new thoughts and developed their thinking. So, other standards must apply. Researchers must be seen to be honest, genuine, truthful as opposed to fraudulent and deceitful, but that said, a researcher listening to a respondent / interviewee, or observing an

activity, will bring an outside perspectives and may misunderstand the meaning. That issue may be solved by 'respondent validation' – that is, asking the opinion of the research focus, who can say, 'No, you have misunderstood'. Moreover, that intentions are honest does not necessitate truthful outcomes. The respondent, however honest, might also be wrong and the ensuing discussion might provoke greater insights.

The issue for autobiography is that the researcher and respondent are the same person. Without conscious effort, errors would remain undiscussed and unchecked. These might involve:

- Groupthink – sharing unreflectively the attitudes of one's social or professional group
- Self-censorship – presenting a distorted picture to hide faults
- Remembering misunderstood interpretations – we may need to critically reassess memories which might be incorrect or distorted.

There is a philosophical literature on truth and validity which includes Habermas' discussion of validity claims based on consensus. (Of course, a thing does not become true just because most people think it is). Habermas presumes that the (autobiographical) speaker speaks truly and with understanding, and is trustworthy; and that the listener hears the description as reasonable. Instances may however not be viewed simplistically:

"validity claim" ... connotes a richer social idea – that a claim (statement) merits the addressee's acceptance because it is justified or true in some sense, which can vary according to the sphere of validity and dialogical context".

(<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/habermas><http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/habermas/>)

In other words, autobiographical statements set up a dialogue in which interpretation is communicated and received, either with agreement or with challenge.

Qualitative research evolved for topics hard to examine in other ways, especially in health service research – Moustakas on loneliness for example (1961), Glaser & Strauss (1967) on experience of dying. Heuristics, including phenomenology came out of the first, Grounded

Theory out of the second. These explore other people's experiences; it was feminism that applied similar methods to researching our own experiences. Liz Stanley (1992) examined methodological issues of autobiography, insisting that the debate or discussion is more important than whether or not history has been described truthfully (i.e. as true history). Frigga Haug (1987, and in Radstone, 2000) developed the method of 'memory work', where groups shared stories to develop general analysis of sexualisation. Kuhn (2002: p.128) offered a view on the dichotomy of time to situate the exchange:

"Remembering is clearly an activity that takes place for, as much as in, the present. Is memory then not understood better as a position or a point of view in the current moment than as an archive or a repository of by-gones? Perhaps memory offers a constantly changing perspective on the places and times through which we - individually and collectively - have been journeying? Perhaps it is only when we look back that we make a certain kind of sense of what we see?"

Norman Denzin's (1989) *Interpretative Biography* became *Interpretative Autoethnography* in 2014, making much of the notion of 'epiphany' in autobiography – that is, crucial turning points in life.

In my research, several 'epiphanies' are apparent: A significant turning point occurred from emergent insight that school had served to enable the young Sean to periodically escape his pitiable home circumstances so allowing him to construct an image for receptive peers. It also provided a relatively safe platform from which to experience a distorted, though intoxicating sense of power through obstinacy with selected teachers. Surviving school and bullying, to return to education as an eighteen year old young adult represents a crucial defining moment. It was only then did I conceive that *qualifications* could offer an alternative to my lot. In retrospect the decision points to a determination to progress and not give up. These qualities have been a constant throughout my teaching career. Much later, through this study, did I comprehend that *study* could offer me a route out of the quandary I have articulated in this work. I had come to experience the distinction between *schooling* and *education* for myself.

I reiterate that the genesis of this study derived from engagement with critical concepts such as ideology and hegemony, and the subsequent realisation that I had been 'had'; that I was a

pawn being 'played' through my unwitting, though honest allegiance to a political agenda at odds with my personal convictions.

I have documented that the absorption of the phrase 'living contradiction' encapsulates much of the personal discovery I encountered, whilst my reconceptualization of children derived from the profoundly simple interplay between Buber's terms 'thou' and 'it'. In Chapter Six I pondered over the distinction between the formal relationships I had with the majority of my teachers, and the two staff I had identified as having had a profound influence on my formative self. On reflection, to various degrees they allowed me to experience them as people rather than roles – yes, but essentially, in their company I experienced myself as 'thou' rather than 'it'. Subsequently the incessant urge to test, to resist and challenge, to prove, had no grounding – I could 'be' myself because 'I' was accepted. That I can articulate this epiphany 30-35 years on is testimony to the unique, and powerful contribution autobiography has made to research of contemporary behaviours in my performance as an authority figure and educator.

My interpretation of life experiences was shared with others as a form of memory work. My approach was dialogical rather than monologic – pupils' voices, colleagues' voices and the voices of Critical Friends provided multiple perspectives. In theoretical terms, my memories and personal point of view was subjected to critical reflection through a range of theoretical standpoints, such as Critical Theory and psychological methods such as Transaction Analysis (TA) and TIEFF. Thus my autobiographical account is far from a simplistic recounting of my past. My past has in the process been both shaken and stirred.

#### **Limitations:**

***To what extent might generalising from your research be problematic because all schools might not be like the ones you experienced and have reacted against? How widespread do you think authoritarian schooling actually is?***

According to the recent Ofsted Report (2014): '*Below the radar: low-level disruption in the country's classrooms*', pupils' obstructive responses to schooling continues to be widespread and "deeply worrying" (p.4). The Report found one in 12 secondary school teachers estimated losing up to 10 minutes teaching and learning time a day due to pupil disruption. Ofsted

proceeded to generalise the findings and applied it to the whole school population so creating headlines in the mass media who cited the Report: “Ofsted: An hour of teaching lost each day to bad behaviour”, and “the equivalent of 38 days of teaching each year – because of indiscipline” (Telegraph: 25/09/14; Ofsted 2014: pp.4-5). Interestingly, whilst working in a school, a Teaching Assistant quoted me the ‘38 days’ on the day after the Report was published and announced it as indisputably a constant and a fact.

The Report acknowledged the variation between different classes in the same school (p.10). My research provided a perspective to show such incidents are sensitive to situational cues, rather than an endemic sweeping arbitrarily across the country’s schools. I believe that my findings in Chapter Five provide rich insights to variables which influence this phenomenon. In addition, my literature review provided a discerning lens to contextualise this concern as politically, socially, culturally, and historically derived. The Report neither mentions these aspects nor states them as problematic. Therefore its conclusions are limited to the questions it poses.

In addition, the Report’s descriptor of “where schools are getting it right” (p.24) is consistent with my work conveyed in Chapter Four. There I outlined the limitations of this behaviourist approach. The Ofsted report offers a pertinent exemplar for ‘getting it right’: “Students understand the school’s behaviour policy and know *it will be implemented rigorously by staff*” (p.24, italics added); my research probes beneath the assumptions of control to illuminate the possibility of psychological cost for staff adhering to such directives. I therefore argue that my findings are potentially significant in contributing to attempts to address concerns currently packaged as disciplinary problems.

### ***Reflect on ‘what next’ questions***

What will my research achieve? At a personal level, it has enabled me, an ordinary teacher, to rewrite my career (and life) script, as Eric Berne (1972) would have said. This has had consequences, since my total dissatisfaction with working in an authoritarian system led me to resign from my school, a decision which, with three school-age children, was not taken lightly. A consequence of this was hearing from other former teachers telling me that their decisions to resign stemmed from similar disquiet, which indicates to me that I have stumbled on a

potentially serious retention issue for Government. Creating less conflictual schools may well encourage retention and saves schools (and Government) money, and reduce the 'wastage' of young trained teachers leaving the profession within their first five years.

My desire to help colleagues may lead to CPD opportunities though success here depends on clients wanting to hear the message offered. I plan therefore a short punchy book for teachers alongside preparing my thesis for publication. I also hope to use the Teaching and Learning tool presented in Chapter Six, to contribute to observation so to provoke and facilitate learning conversations. There are two directions – bottom-up, enthusing class teachers to want this change; and top down, persuading Headteachers and senior staff to allow them to do it.

Most importantly, I want to help them to help children like my former self, the product of a deprived and dysfunctional background who found difficulty with school authoritarianism and became a school failure. I ask what could my own schooling have done to help me to succeed and to value education. My friendships with peers represented the joy and escape, whilst too many of the lessons were akin to a prison (which created the conditions for degrees of espionage). Despite leaving school with only one decent grade pass I refused to accept being labelled as a failure and re-educated myself as an adult. I believe that in today's educational climate of league tables and exclusions, a national debate on these issues is needed.

### **Identifying platforms for my work**

A recent development has applied my work to the world of professional football. The Football Association (FA) have recognised that whilst there is ample attention on the physical, technical, and psychological development of young players, the importance of human interactions, though crucial, is currently not provided for. Recently a Premiership Football Club in London asked me to ensure that their application of the FA's Social Corner was 'cutting edge'. This has been an interesting challenge so far. In an environment notorious for competition and macho culture I have had the opportunity to work with coaches of Under 8 – Under 18 teams. Aside from providing practical strategies to re-direct, the contributions of instruments such as sociograms and TIFF have given them new insights. My methodology which assumes the adult to be competent, and the issues they face to be adaptive have, I believe, minimised the threat I,



as an external 'expert' pose to members of this established community. My previous experience, especially as a PE teacher, and standing as a researcher, has reassured coaches that the guidance to "react less, and respond more" stated in FA course literature can be to their benefit, and ultimately to the benefit of the young players within their charge. A meeting is being arranged with the FA to develop this work more widely.

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Cumulative extracts and individual references for  
The 'Means Business' Teacher & The 'Scary' Teacher.

9MON2F6:

Everyone is **quiet (31)** when I walk in to the classroom;

9MON2M4:

[S/he]...looks at you as you come in;

10Fri5F11:

People sat in their normal seats... **Organised (12)** when you come in;

10Fri5F14:

He settles everyone down quickly;

X9FRI4F4:

They have the 'teacher radar' ... they get order / greet the class;

9FRI4F4:

...address the whole class aware of what everyone is doing;

X9FRI4M6:

...they pick up on everything and state the rules at the beginning;

10Fri5M6:

...there [is] an immediate **seating plan (8)** and silence, there is also work on the board and other people are working this suggests that they have already been told to be quiet;

9thu3f2:

If **everyone (30)** is listening to them;

8Fri3M2:

Everyone has got everything ready;

9MON2M11:

...the teacher is very strict and the rumours you hear from other students about the teacher;

7FRI1F7:

If you have been told by an older student;

9FRI4M8:

Reputation. What I've heard from my sister;

10THUP4F10:

The **other (11)** students in the room give a lot away too, and you can tell what is going on;

9FRI4F7:

...everyone else is (creepily silent);

8Fri3F13:

When **all (14)** the people that usually mess around are quiet;

7MON3M16:

The trouble makers are quiet and getting on with their **work (17)**;

7FRIP1F6:

...the ones that are usually bad aren't bad but they are good;

x9TH3M11:

The teacher **looks (18)** really well organised;

10THUP4F6:

...looks confident in what they are doing;

9FRI4M10:

He or she looks like they have **control (10)** of a lesson;

10Fri5F9:

Stuff laid on the table and all very organised;

10THUP4M8:

Table layout, if all tables are in rows it feels like there is less chance of getting away with anything;

10THUP4M14:

They have control and give you freedom but knows how to keep **calm (9)**;

9MON2F3:

Calm and collected;

X9FRI4M5:

Everyone is quiet and calm;

X9FRI4F6:

...the class is calm and interacting with the tasks.

9MON2M2:

Physical appearance of the teacher;

10THUP4F10:

Body language of the teacher gives a lot away, you can tell if a teacher 'means business' or if they are, so say 'a pushover';

10Fri5F15:

[They are] already annoyed e.g. scowling, tapping foot, arms crossed;

9FRI4M8:

The way they **look (27)**;

9FRI4F6:

If they look mean;

10Fri5F10:

If they don't look happy;

9FRI4F9:

The way they look at you;

9MON2F8:

They look strict; they give you the look;

7MON3M9:

...look of authority;

8Fri3F5:

They look at you and stare;

7MON3F7:

They look **stern (9)**;

8Fri3M7:

They look evil;

7FRIP1F1:

They look scary;

10THUP4M8:

Harsh looking teacher;

9thu3m3:

...looks **angry (14)**;

10Fri5F3:

They have the teacher 'look', confidence, zero-tolerance, strict, never shouts and when they do its really scary;

10Fri5M11:

Male figures tend to be more intimidating;

9FRI4M12:

You can see the teacher looks **scary (11)** and big;

9thu3f3:

...Their shouting is scary!

8Fri3M1:

When they are really strict but that makes the lesson scary;

8Fri3F10:

The look on their face and the way they sit and talk it makes you feel small and scared;

7MON3M4:

...they have a stern **face (10)**;



9thu3f5:

[A] strict face;

7FRIP1M14:

...a straight face;

7FRIP1F11:

... a stubborn face;

8Fri3F7:

... a convincing look on their face;

7FRIP1F12:

Teacher doesn't smile;

If I **know (26)** how they are;

8Fri3F3:

...the pupils know not to mess about;

10THUP4M7:

...you know s/he has a short fuse;

7FRIP1F1:

...they **say (19)** 'silence' and they don't let you speak or anything, not even fidget;

10Fri5M5:

They don't smile, [or] say hello;

9thu3m1:

Very strict and they say don't mess about or I will come down on you like a ton of bricks;

9FRI4F9:

They say [what] they expect you to do;

10Fri5F6:

The way the teacher greets you as you walk through the door, their tone of **voice (17)**;

9MON2F3:

...authority in voice;

10Fri5F9:

[a] strong voice;

10Fri5M7:

...a clear, loud demanding voice;

9thu3f4:

...raises voice;

9FRI4F7:

Teacher has powerful voice;

8Fri3F7:

The teacher has a **loud (8)** voice;

8Fri3F10:

...shouts in a **bad (9)** voice;

10Fri5F12:

Using his voice... shows you up in the class in front of your mates;

9thu3f9:

**strong (12)** eye contact;

9FRI4M4:

[Has a] strong mind;

9FRI4M5:

If he stays strong;

9FRI4F8:

Someone who is persistent and strong willed;

10THUP4F2:

...a strong personality;

X9FRI4M10:

They might be in a **mood (11)**;

X9FRI4M14:

...a bad mood;

[A dominant descriptive term to emerge throughout the accounts is the word '**strict**'. It is selected **73** times].

7FRIP1M1:

The teacher is strict; C system is used properly;

8Fri3M6:

Teacher strict and over uses the C system;

10THUP4F7:

You can always **tell (14)** if they are a nice teacher or a mean teacher and when you first meet a teacher;

9MON2M6:

If they shout a lot or they are **nice (9)** to you;

x9TH3M2:

They are strict or they seem nice;

10Fri5M2:

The teacher could be strict or could be nice and make the lesson **fun (8)** so the kids won't begin to mess around;

x9TH3M5:

The teacher would be fun or strict;

9MON2M3:

They could be very strict, telling people off e.g. C1, C2, C3 etc. It could be a fun, enjoyable lesson, not getting told off;

[There is also some recognition that an individual teacher might embody both traits].

10Fri5F12:

The teacher starts the lesson promptly and she/he makes the **rules (8)** clear. Shows anger as well as a nice side;

8Fri3M4:

Teachers that have done loads for me and like to have a laugh and strict;

8Fri3F4:

They are a nice teacher. Scary when they are angry;

To conclude responses from this question, three additional factors were sifted from the data:

9MON2F1:

**Routine** for going in the room; teacher is waiting at the front rather than outside or looking at the computer; you are told to take non-uniform items off straight away;

9MON2M2:

[Depends on the] lesson / **subject**;

X9FRI4M12:

**Important teachers** are in the same room as the teacher

Cumulative extracts and individual references for The 'Ineffective' Teacher.

10Fri5M4:

The first signals are were people carrying on talking after the teacher has addressed the class and nobody has paid attention. Also if the teacher 'fumbles about' and seems without confidence then that is like a licence to misbehave;

9TH3M1:

Certain teachers **don't (83)** have a back bone and don't put others in their place or make an example of them;

9TH3F7:

If we know what a teacher is like. If we're used to them we can see they have no control or weak or they're a push over so they **don't** give you consequences;

9TH3F4:

What people have told you;

9FRI4M4:

When you notice the normal teacher isn't there you think yes, sub! Because they don't follow things up;

10Fri5F15:

...teachers who don't stick to uniform rules;

10THUP4M11:

When a teacher **does not** take action... When teachers continue to give warnings but do not give out any actual punishment. When inexperienced teachers are not fully aware of the sanction system;

9TH3M13:

...**don't** shell out Cs often;

X9FRI4F3:

If the teacher continuously tells you how little detentions they've given out, it generally means they **don't** want to. Female teachers are more lax than males;

9MON2M3:

Let you off very easily;

9TH3M3:

It is a new supply...if they **don't** know what they're doing people walk all over them...they don't look in control;

9TH3M8:

... **doesn't (37)** have control over a class;

8Fri3F5:

Clueless about what is actually happening.

As one boy phrased it:

Y9FRI4F4: Because us students have a, err... 'teacher radar' – it judges what the teacher is like, it's automatic, we can't prevent it;

10Fri5F7:

The body language and tone of the teacher;

9FRI4M12:

They have a high voice;

9FRI4F3:

You can tell by facial expressions;

10Fri5F3:

They are nervous;

10Fri5F12:

When we can see the teacher is weak;

10THUP4M5:

If there is already **messing (31)** about. If the teacher is unorganised.

(Almost exclusively messing about and messing around).

9TH3F1:

When the teacher **just (30)** stands there doing nothing.

(**Just** – adjective barely/hardly/scarcely/slightly used to indicate diminished responsibility).

9FRI4F2:

When a teacher repeats a C1 so he or she gives the students loads of warnings so they are **just** empty threats;

8Fri3F7:

Some **just** stand there with their arms folded and just wait for students to be quiet – they rarely are!!!

8Fri3F10:

...people screaming and the teacher is **just** talking louder to try and talk over them;

10Fri5F15:

They're not ready when you enter the room so you know it'll be hard for them to get order later. The teacher is **just** a pushover and even if they shout at you, it's just funny;

9MON2F10:

The teachers who **just** give you instructions and then read or go on the computer, so it feels like you're not really feeling like it's a proper lesson;

X9FRI4M14:

Bad ... teacher **just** lets you do what you want; can't control the class;

9TH3M11:

If the teacher concentrates on controlling one unruly student;

9MON2F7:

...the teacher is off-task;

7FRIP1M11:

I just get bored and start mucking around or if my mate gets bored he starts being naughty so I copy him;

9TH3M3:

When **everyone (26)** else is;

9TH3F6:

When **everyone's** messing around;

9MON2F3:

...**everyone** sat in a different place; people stood up;

10Fri5F9:

...we can get **away with it (18)** better. Sit by your friends as new teacher doesn't know seating plan;

9MON2F7:

If the teacher hasn't been clear telling us to do something, so **everyone** does their own thing;

9FRI4F6:

...if others that normally don't mess around do with this teacher;

8Fri3M4:

Because **everyone** else is doing it so I join in to fit in;

9TH3F9:

... if I was to mess around I would probably follow my **friends (17)** ... because you want to be cool and don't want to look like a 'wuss';

9TH3F6:

When **everyone's** messing around and when you know what the teacher is like so you know how far you can go without getting **told off (19)**;

8Fri3M10:

That you're in a big group and it overawes the teacher;

X9FRI4F8:

...**everyone** does it so you wouldn't get caught;

10THUP4F8:

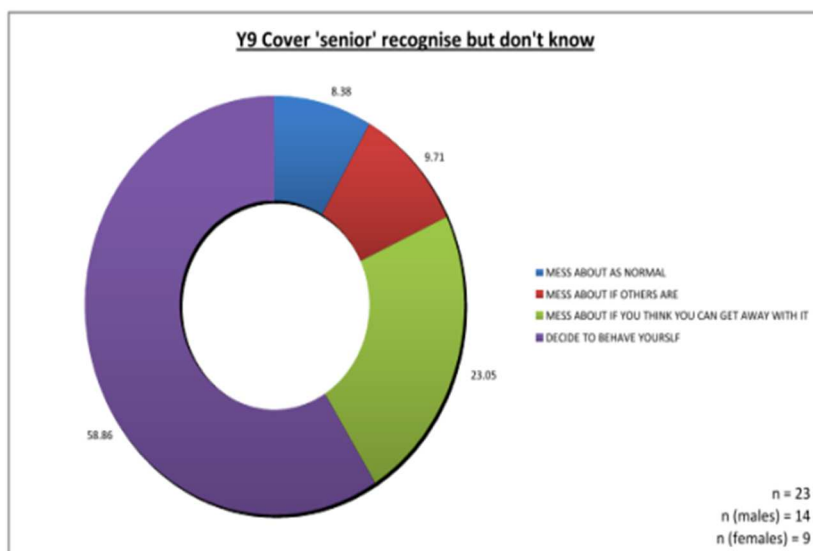
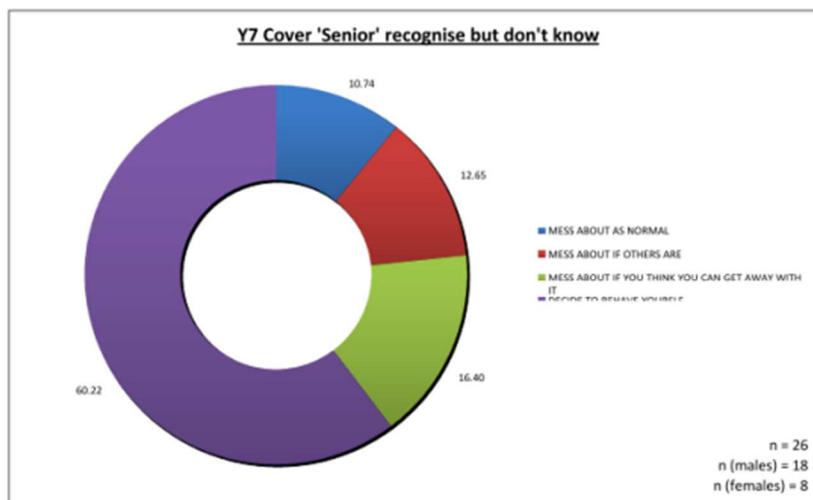
I don't know what it is, it's just like with some you know you can get away with it and others you can't. I think its **respect and fear** but I'm not really sure. If you see one person getting away with it then you can and soon **everyone** is and the teacher can't keep control;

8Fri3F5:

**Doesn't** do anything to stop the chaos.

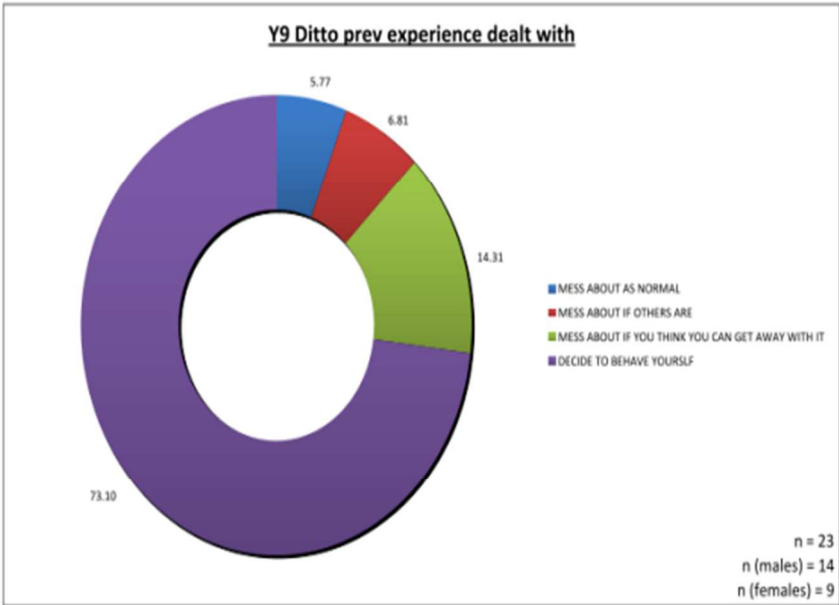
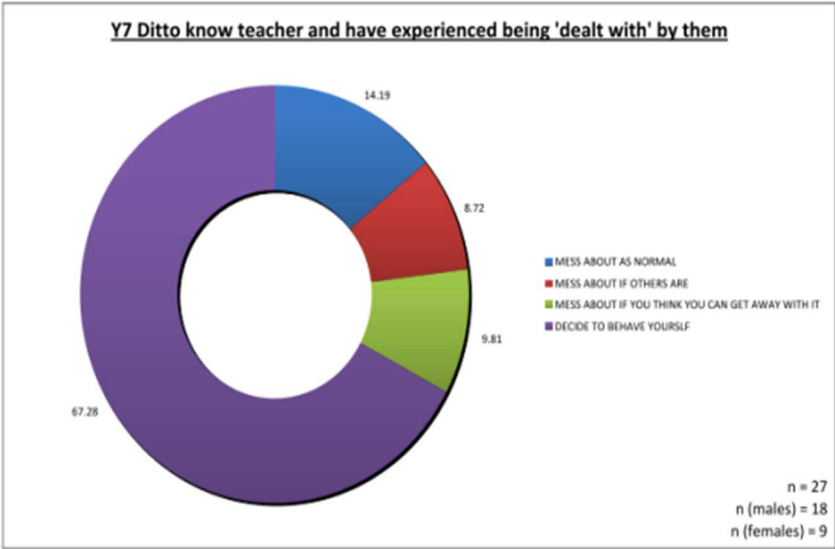
# SHIFTING BOUNDARIES

Q:1

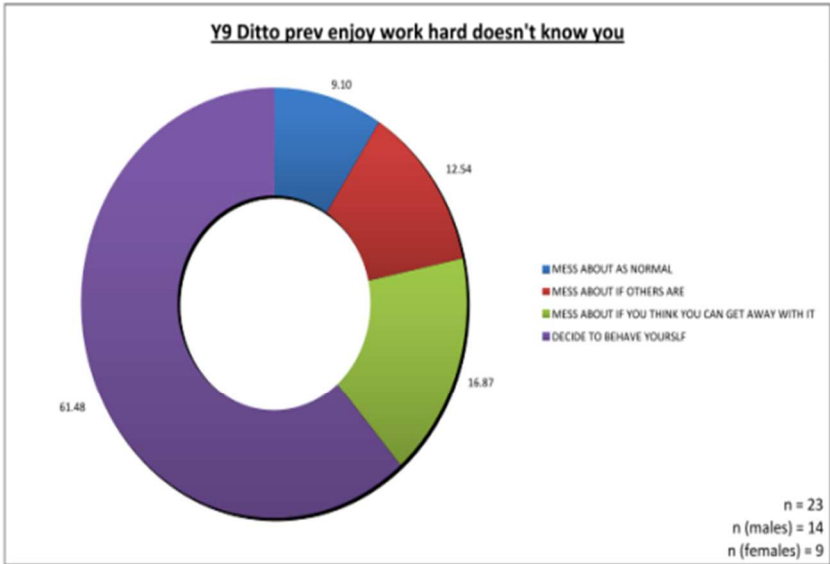
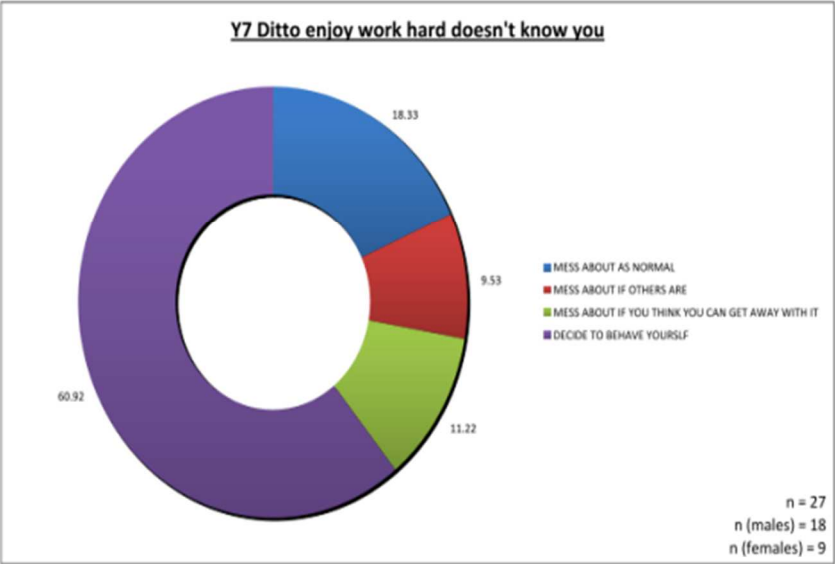




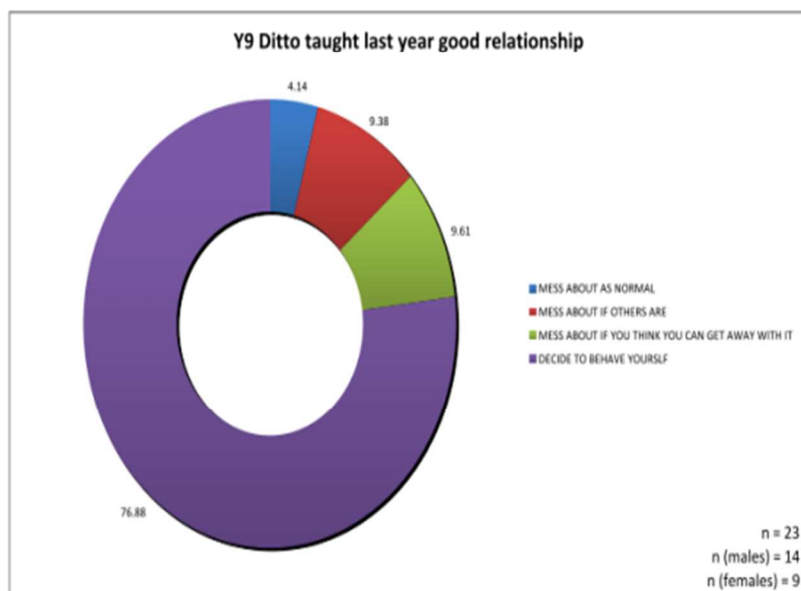
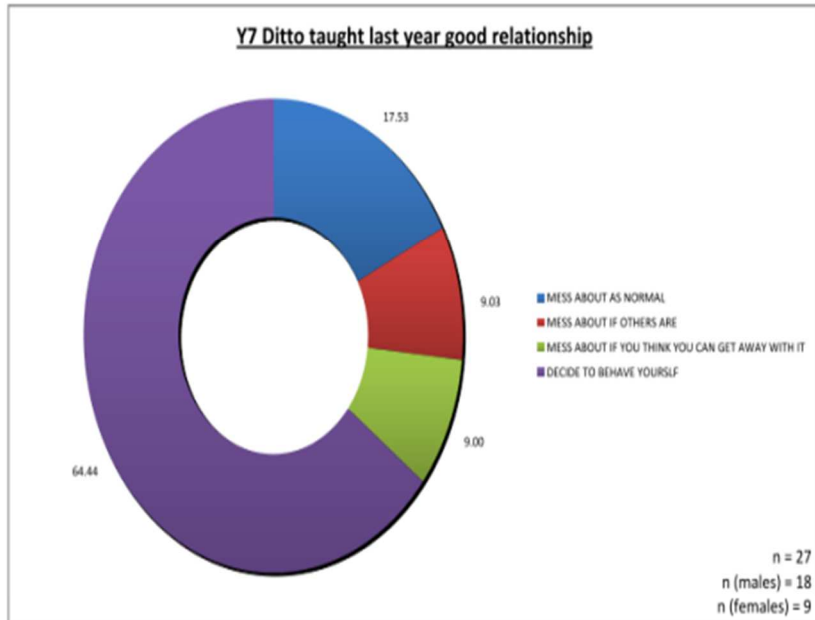
Q:2



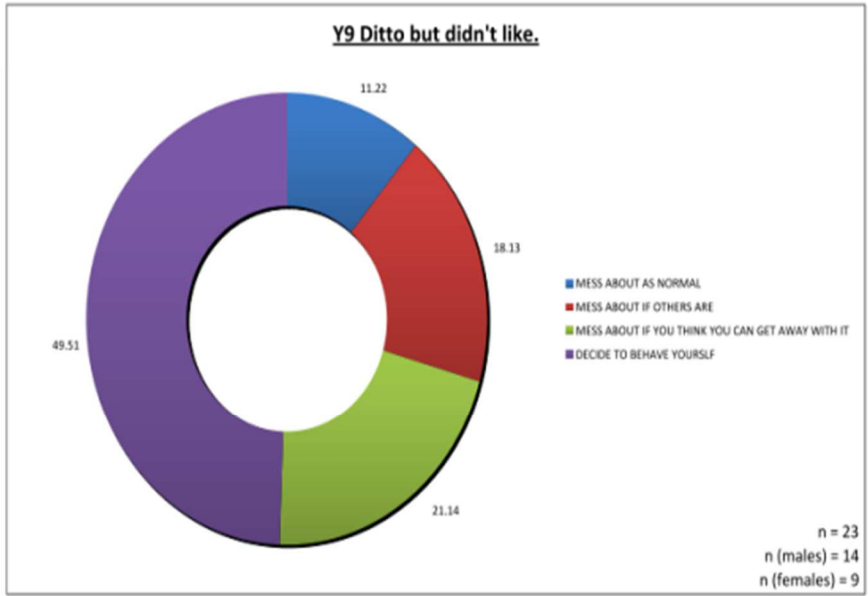
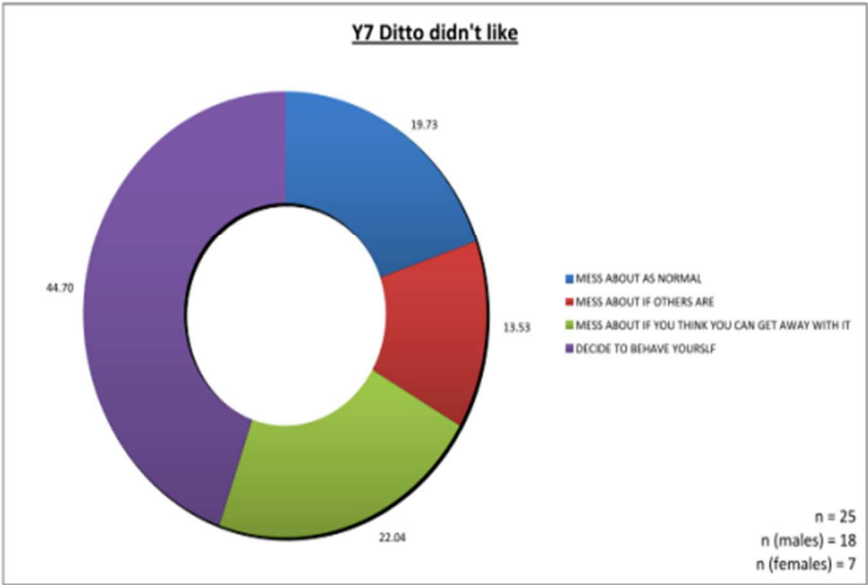
Q:3



## Q:4

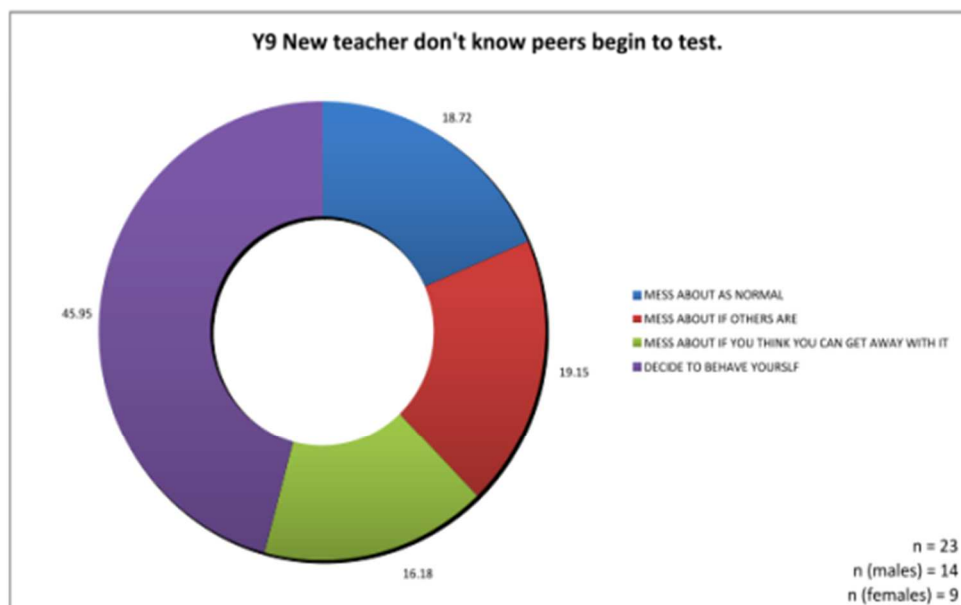
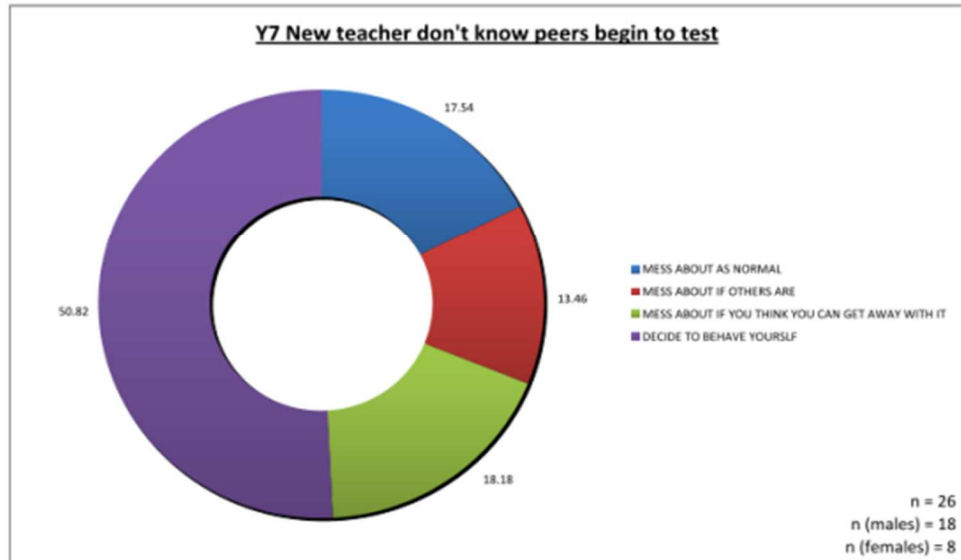


Q:5

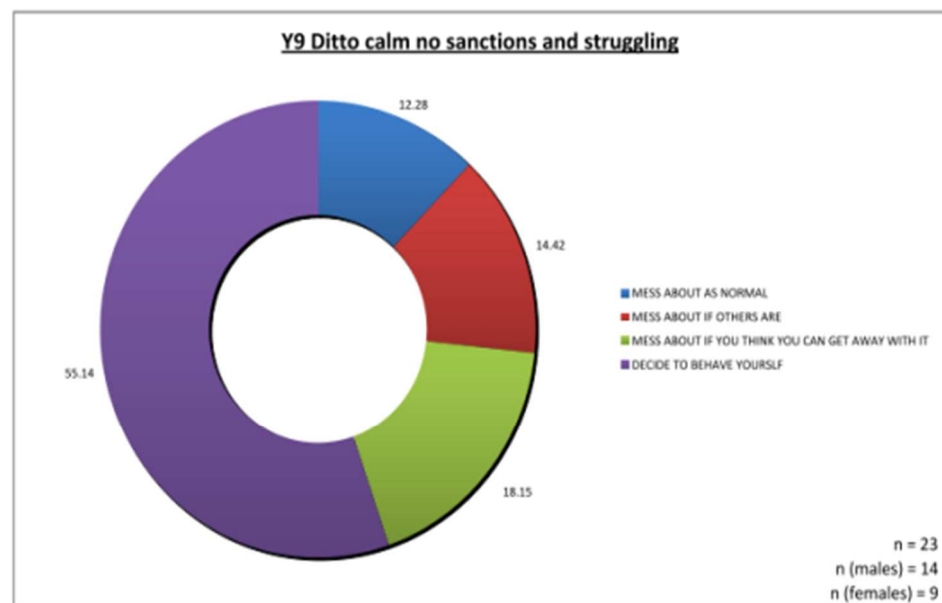
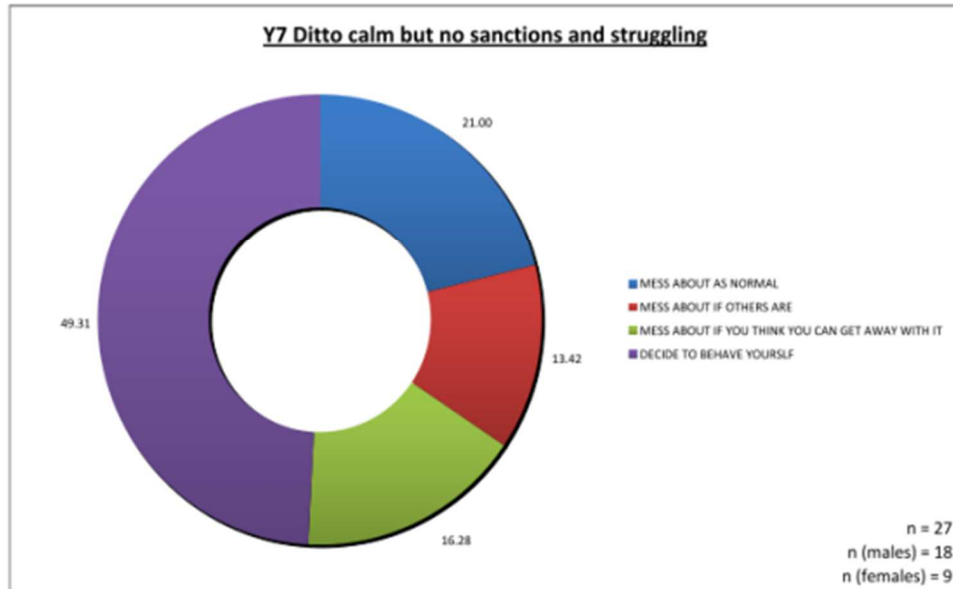


## Appendix 5D

### Shifting Boundaries Q:6

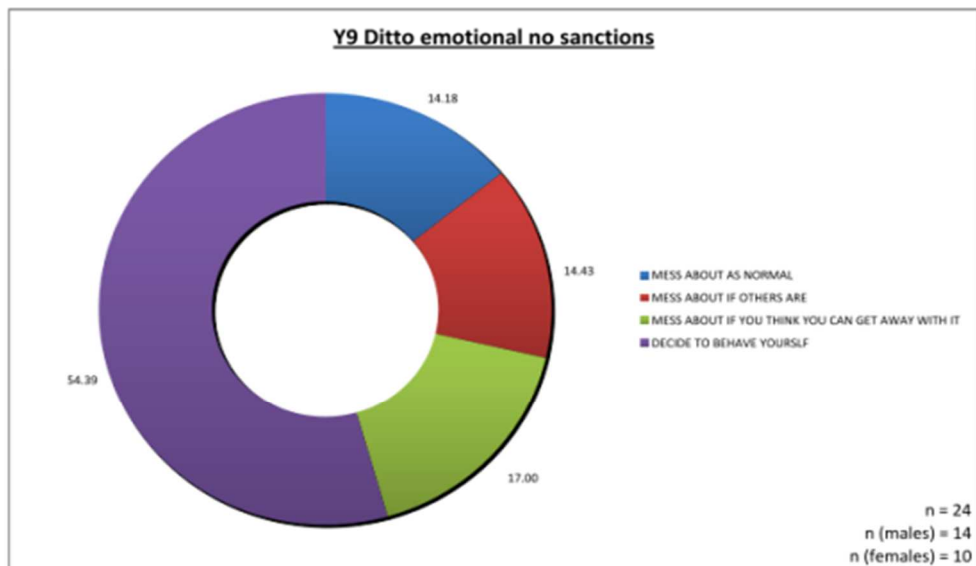
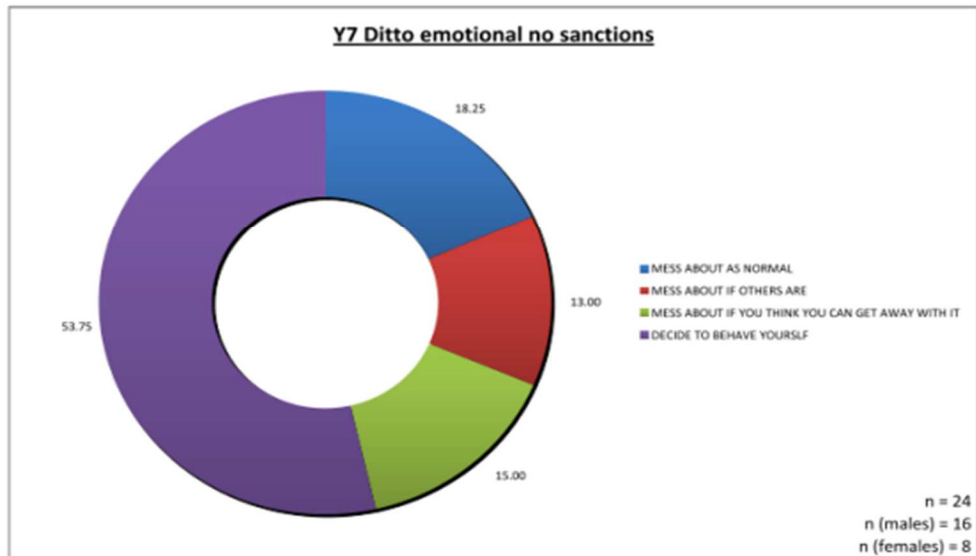


Q:7

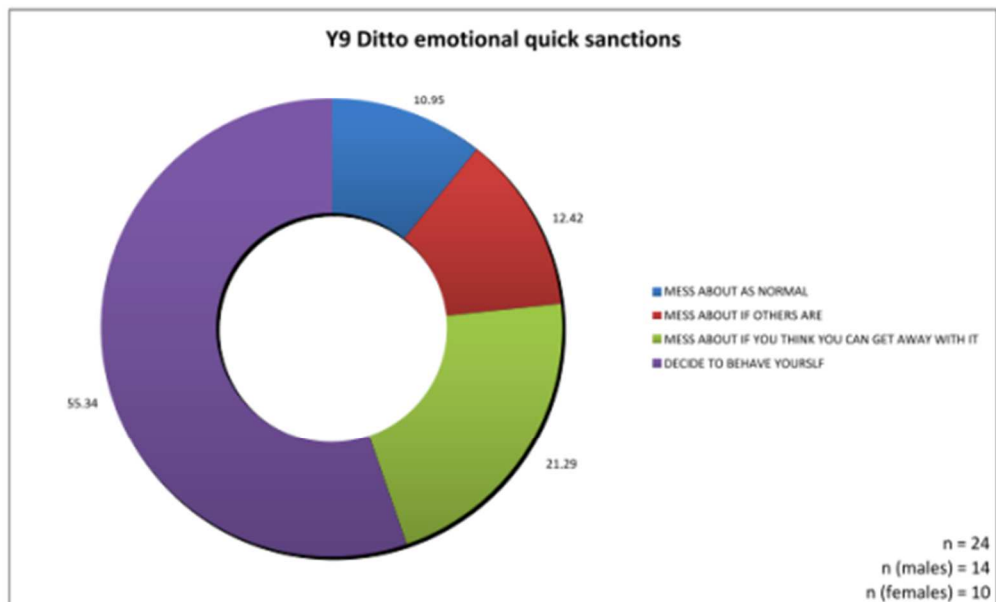
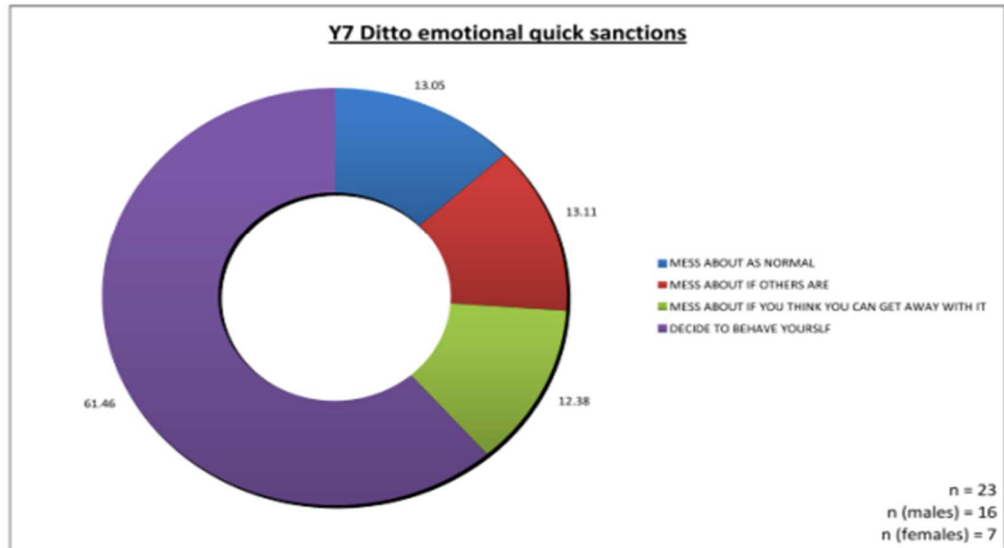


## Appendix 5D

Q:8



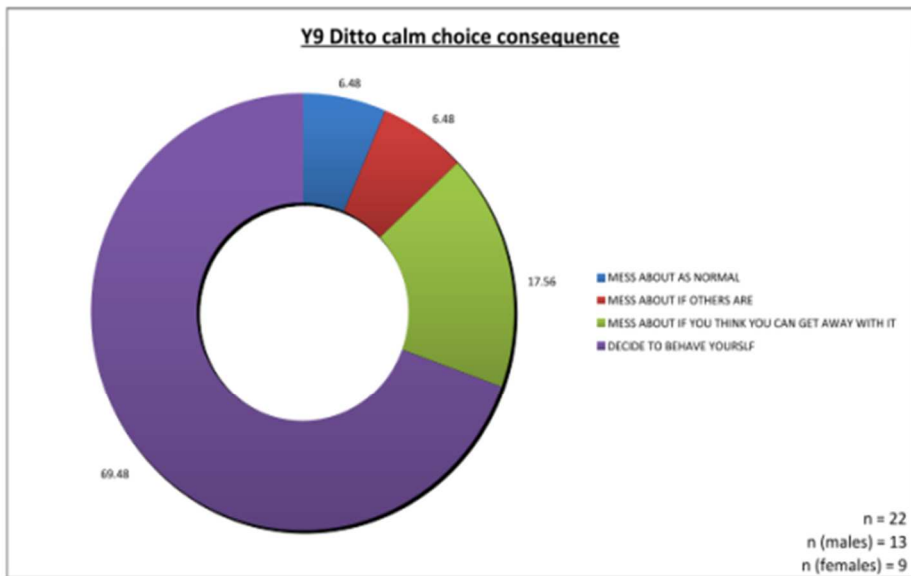
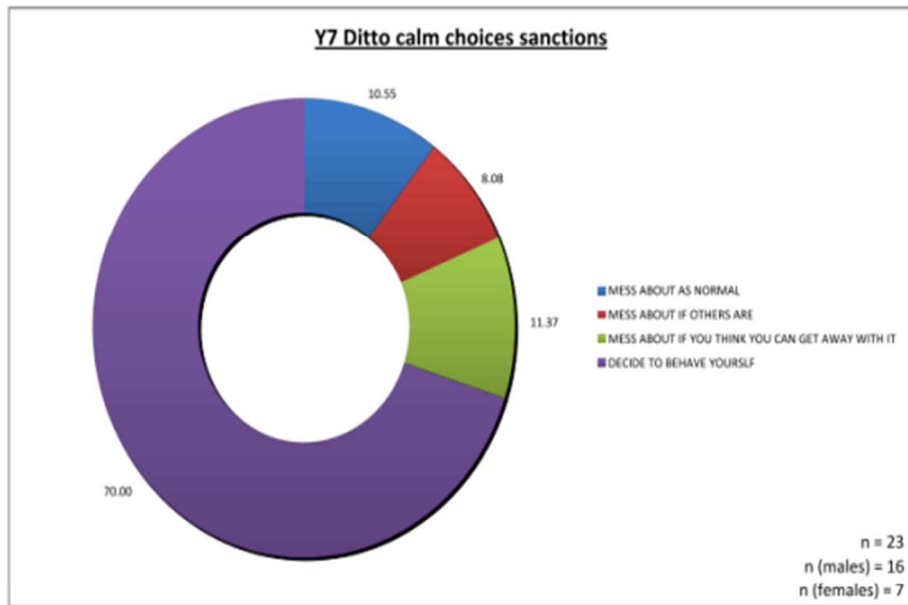
Q:9





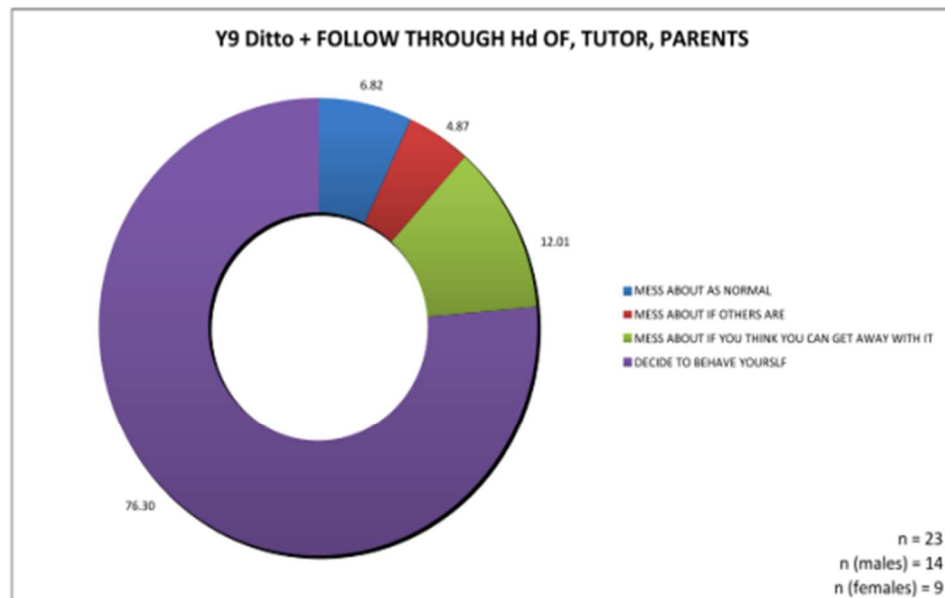
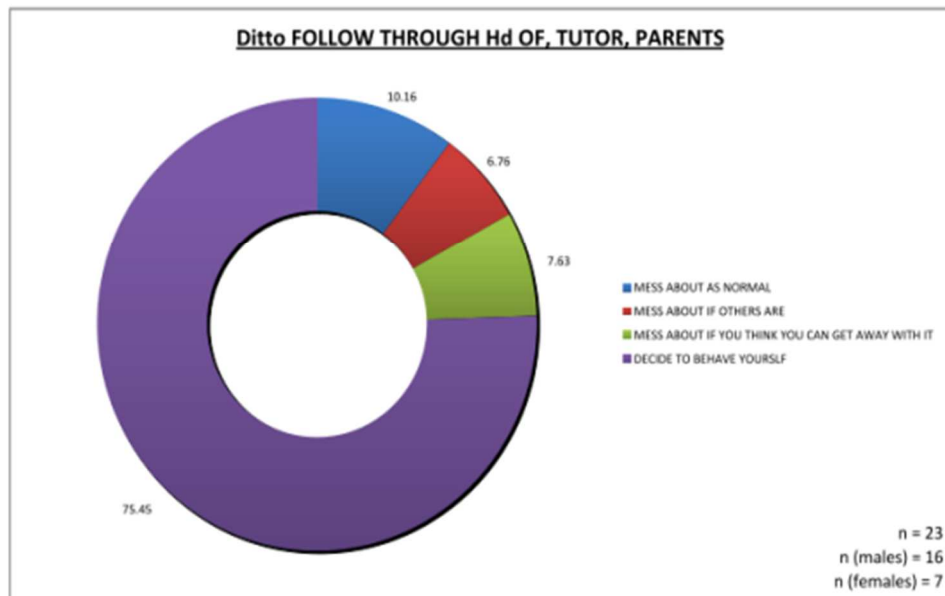
## Appendix 5D

Q:10



## Appendix 5D

Q:11



Full transcript from cited extracts with Y8 pupils discussing lessons with FTT.

(Hi2): "She like just put her hand up in the air as her signal for us to be quiet... it could be like 5 minutes"

(Hi4): "At the start she never used the C system she just like put her hand up and give us like warnings... And then she would say I'll give you a C1 but she never did but like last two weeks she started giving out C1s and that and keeping us back after class"

SW: *"Did that have an effect on you?"*

(Hi4): "Yeah, we started behaving a bit better"

SW: *"You started listening to her?"*

(Hi4): "Yeah"

(Hi2): "Sometimes she was sending people out for 5 minutes and then getting them back in and then sending another person out for no reason and it was like just not fair telling them all off"

SW: *"It seems to me you feel there was a bit of unfairness in what was happening"*

(All 4): "Yeah"

(Hi3): "I think more people were getting annoyed with her because sometimes after lessons she would keep us in for 5 or 10 minutes after the lesson for no reason"

SW: *"The whole class?"*

(All): "Yeah"

(Hi3): "And people were getting more and more annoyed with her and that's why they were naughty in the lesson"

(Hi1): "I think when she did keep us back, and this is like school kid behaviour but it was like we're not going to work for her if she's going to waste our time we're going to try and waste hers"

Further dialogue led to the children considering their reaction to the prospect of suddenly being aware of my presence in the door way. The interview led to me challenging many of their underlying assumptions as I highlighted the contradictions between what I represented and their actual experience of me:

(Hi1): "I would probably have shut up and nudged the person next to me and we would have all like seen you and..."

SW: *"Even if I hadn't said anything?"*

(Hi1): "Even if you hadn't said anything, even if you were just standing there".

(Hi4): "We would have stopped and listened to Ms"

SW: *"And would you have?"* (looking at Hi2)

(Hi2): *"Yeah"*

SW: *"What happens in your head and the heads of your classmates which directs them to suddenly be quiet?"*

(Hi2): *"We would have got a telling off or something because we were being really naughty"*

SW: *"But Ms could have told you off"*

(Hi2): *"Yeah"*

SW: *"And also consider I have never told you off in our two years together have I?"*

(All): *"No"*

SW: *"So where did you get the idea I would give you a telling off?"*

(Hi4): *"Well we have you every week and we are used to you..."*

SW: *"So it's to do with you knowing me well?"*

(All): *"Yeah"*

(Hi1): *"Because we know you can control us if you know what I mean"*

SW: *"What do you mean by 'can control you'?"*

(Hi1): *"Like"* (pause)

SW: *"Because I can't actually control you can I?"*

(Hi1): *"Yeah, but...I'm not sure, I think that I just behave"*

SW: *"Because I guess I could C1, C2s and all that"*

(Hi1): *"Yeah"*

SW: *"But then again so could Ms"*

(Hi1): *"Yeah"*

SW: *"And I don't give you C1 and C2s. so what is it about me, my presence in the doorway which means you think 'I had better shut up'?"*

(Hi1): *"Maybe because we kind of respect you more, we've been with you for two years"*

(SW COMMENT: I wonder if disapproval might be key here?)

SW: *"What about if it was Mr HT (Head-teacher) ... you've not been with him for two years?"*

(Hi1): "We definitely would stop straight away I think"

SW: *"Because..."*

(Hi4): "Because he is the Head teacher and..."

SW: *"So it is status as well"*

(Hi1): Yeah"

(Hi2): "He has high expectations"

SW: *"What about if it were another trainee teacher?"*

(Hi1): "We probably would have just carried on if we didn't know who they were"

(Hi4): "No, not if we didn't really know them"

SW: *"So you have to know them or know of them?"*

(All): "Yeah"

SW: *"Is it anything to do with the way someone looks. If you didn't know me would the way I look stood at the door make any difference?"*

(Hi4): "Yeah because you've got like this, you stand, like really hard if you know what I mean"

(Hi2): "Yeah"

SW: *"What about you?"*

(Hi3): "Yeah"

SW: *"What if I was a smallish woman, would that make a difference?"*

(Hi4): "I think it would, I don't know, I think we prefer male teachers"

(All agree)

SW: *"Are there some teachers in the school who don't resemble anything of me but you still behave for if you saw them standing in the doorway?"*

(Hi2): "Ms D"

(Hi3): "Yeah. Ms H"

SW: *"So it is not necessarily to do with how someone looks then?"*

(Hi4): "No"

(Hi2): "Not really"

(Hi4): "It's the way they stand and talk"

(Hi2): "Yeah"

SW: *"The way they present themselves?"*

(All) (resounding) "Yeah".

## The Functional Fluency Modes in Action

The TIFF® Questionnaire gives you scores on these nine modes of behaviour

### DOMINATING

Using Dominating Mode, we focus on the negative. We believe we are right & may take an adversarial 'me or you' stance. We want obedience from others, notice mistakes & find fault in order to improve people or situations, from a point of view of knowing better. We persuade or coerce others into compliance, including ourselves, using warnings, threats or sometimes even punishments in order to teach a lesson. Others may indeed comply, but may also react by resisting or rebelling.

### STRUCTURING

Using Structuring Mode, we actively empower others by our ways of inspiring confidence & motivation. We set appropriately firm limits & high expectations, providing the boundaries for others to feel secure enough to grow & learn. We believe in people's potential for success & offer the help & support that is needed. We focus on the positive, believing that whatever gets attention is likely to increase. In response, people tend to do their best, & develop their own competence & self-confidence.

Using Accounting Mode we are 'with it' & in tune with our own internal states as well as sensitive & receptive to stimuli from others & the environment. We take an objective attitude & keep things in proportion. Accounting also means making

### COOPERATIVE

Using Cooperative Mode, we show assertive friendliness & consideration for others. We stand up for ourselves in socially acceptable ways, & are willing to listen & negotiate from an I'm OK – You're OK standpoint. We feel confident about handling social situations because we can rely on our skills of diplomacy & assertiveness, expecting for ourselves the same respect that we show to others. Using this mode, we get on well with others & enjoy company at work & leisure.

### COMPLIANT/RESISTANT

Using Compliant/Resistant Mode, we often favour one of the two styles, depending on how we have learned in the past to cope with demands we have found too difficult. In the Compliant style we conform, make concessions & try to please others. We often feel nervous about doing things, scared of making mistakes. In the Resistant style, we vary between mild obstinacy & outright aggressive rebellion. Sometimes we switch from one style to the other depending on the context.

### MARSHMALLOWING

Using Marshmallowing Mode, we confuse wants with needs & over-supply others with help, attention & material goods, though this may not be beneficial in the long term. Over-indulgence is the result & recipients finish up sad & angry rather than grateful which leads to confusion & frustration on both sides. In this mode we don't realise that inappropriate assistance hinders rather than helps, & that lack of consistent limits & expectations is harmful to people's health & development.

### NURTURING

Using Nurturing Mode, we respond empathically to others, including ourselves, appreciating how people may be feeling & responding appropriately to their needs. We use understanding & kindness to express non-judgemental acceptance of ourselves & others which encourages people to be more fully themselves. Being available for people in this way promotes healthy self-acceptance & the positive attitudes which support healing & the building of self esteem.

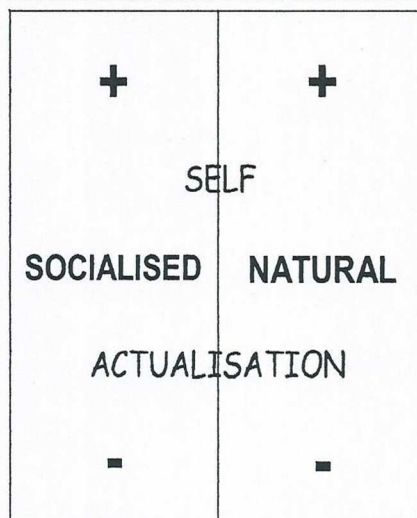
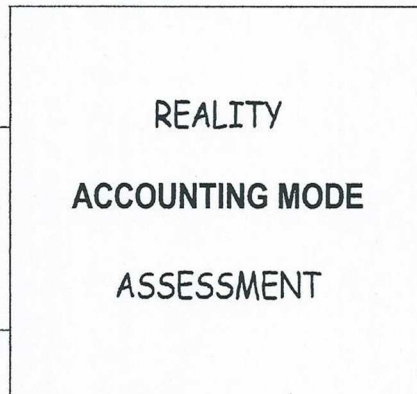
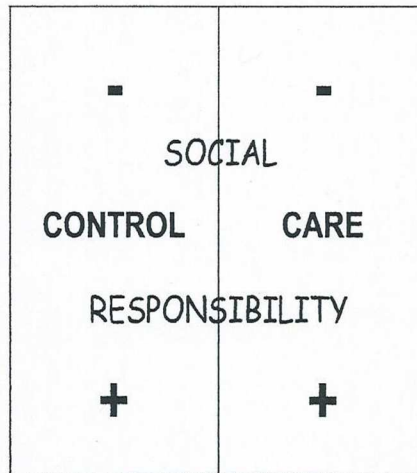
logical sense of available data so that decision making & actions can be based on relevant & realistic assessment of the current situation. Accounting is an essential component of effective use of the four other positive modes.

### SPONTANEOUS

Using Spontaneous Mode, we often have a playful attitude which lets our creativity flow freely. We access energy & motivation to use our unique & original ideas both in response to situations & to take initiatives. Our vitality is infectious & enjoyable. We feel, & express what we feel, freely, without any inhibition or censorship, & yet also keep an age-appropriate sense of proportion. Individual temperamental style will influence our level of natural exuberance in this mode.

### IMMATURE

Using Immature mode, we don't take fully grown-up view-points or responsibilities. We leave others to take precautions, do maintenance jobs or the clearing up unless it happens to suit us or we are made to do it. We don't enjoy sharing or taking turns, & often fail to see how our actions may be affecting others, & what the consequences of this lack of care or consideration might be. Emotional expression is sometimes out of control & may be out of proportion to the circumstances.



Individual references for evidence used in segments throughout Chapter Six

**6.4.1:**

Y7MON310/11F3:

"Mr Warren always welcomes people even if he is under pressure / stress".

Y7F210/11F6:

"He welcomes you to the lessons and he waits till everyone comes in to the classroom".

Y7F210/11M10:

"Yes as he always seems happy to see us".

Y7TUES210/11F11:

"I feel very welcomed and looked after because he takes in account your problems and feelings".

Y7MON310/11M2:

"I do think that we are welcomed because he always smiles".

Y7THUR110/11M1:

"As soon as we walk in he says hello with a smile".

**6.4.1.3:**

Y7THUR110/11F1:

"Yes because unlike other classes we get breaks in the middle of lessons".

Y7F210/11M11:

"Most teachers will shout "come sit down". But Mr Warren was all like "please take a seat".

Y7F210/11F6:

"You can tell because some teachers don't plan a fun lesson but we do have a brill lesson".

Y7MON310/11M1:

"When the teacher gives you the evil eye, Mr Warren will ask you nicely to be quiet".

Y7THUR110/11M5:

"I am treated well and always listened to by Mr Warren but all teachers don't".

**6.4.1.4:**

Y7F210/11M14:

"The fact that the behaviour/number thing is good so you know not to mess about but have fun and learn".

Y7F210/11F11:

"I knew how to behave because of the count down and the numbers on the different coloured paper".

Y7THUR110/11F6:



"Because you lose points and the whole class will suffer".

Y7F210/11M8:

"You use the number cards (7654321) and if you get to 0 you'd do book work".

**6.4.3:**

Y7F210/11M3:

"As you don't shout or be mean so I don't have any reason to be naughty or nasty".

Y7TUES210/11F7:

"Because I liked you".

Y7MON310/11F2:

"You just take care of us and stuff".

10FRI5M10:

"I do not enjoy RE but I do like Mr Warren as a teacher".

10FRI5F3:

"Its fine, but I prefer Mr Warren rather than RE. He has made it a good subject but normally I don't like RE. I used to dread it last year".

7FRI1M3:

"I don't really like RE but it has grown on me".

Y7TUES210/11F13:

"I feel scared... Sometimes.

Yes [I feel welcomed and valued] by the teacher, but not by pupils".

Y7THUR110/11F12:

"Because when you are angry and cross you are scary".

9MON2M5:

"Fine, like any other lesson, just plain simple school".

9TH3M3:

"Getting ready to be bored".

9TH3M11:

"Bored and thinking 'oh no'".

9TH3M1:

"I do not look forward to sir's lessons and I dislike the method of teaching".

10FRI5F15:

"Don't really look forward to it, find the lesson boring and not too keen on stupid jokes every lesson".

**6.6.1:**

Y7THUR110/11M7:

"If I get a bit out of **line** he talks to me and then I am ok".

9FRI4F4:

"We know you don't stand for nonsense, and we know when to draw the **line** because without shouting you present warnings".

9TH3F9:

"Well, you are caring and funny but you put people who cross the line in their place because as I said before... you put people in their place - if they cross the **line**".

10FRI5F6:

"I think you just set the rules so we know where we stand. Also you respect us and we can have a laugh with you but we also know when not to cross the **line**".

**6.7.6:**

8Fri3F12:

"We know that it's a balance – if we treat the teacher with respect, we get fun and enjoyment back".

9FRI4M1:

"You are firm but fair and never raise your voice because you treat everyone like young adults and with respect".

9FRI4F2:

"You respect us and believe we can do things and treat us as young adults. You give us freedom, but not too much that we can take advantage of it because you explain to us what you expect in the lesson. And if you are annoyed you don't shout but explain your disappointment which has more effect".

9MON2F7:

"Very respectful, you'd make me feel bad if I was naughty because I know I'd let you down. Very helpful and explain the lesson well and funny so I feel comfortable. Because you show respect towards everyone so no-one wants to throw it back in your face".

10FRI5F1:

"You never shout at us, which is always a bad reaction because it makes us angry and fight back. You never raise your voice which gets respect and you kind of look disappointed which makes us feel obliged to behave".

Y10THUR4M11:

"You treat us with respect and this makes us want to do the same back. You don't take everything too seriously but you are serious when you should be".

Y7F210/11M1:

"He teaches us respectfully and seems to put a lot of effort and energy into his lessons so the least he deserves is respect".

Y7F210/11F3:

"You're not too strict so people aren't afraid to answer any questions you ask. You are patient, calm and a great teacher. You give the same amount of respect to anyone in the classroom".

**6.9.3.3:**

Y7F210/11M8:

"Yes because we have **fun** but we learn a lot as well. It is very clever".

Y7F210/11M10:

"I like to be left to do the task we are given as we **enjoy** it more".

Y7F210/11F2:

"I like the open challenges because he **trusts** us to make the right decisions whilst other teachers don't".

Y7F210/11F5:

"Yes I like the lessons and challenges because he tells us then we get on **independently**".

Y7MON310/11F12:

"I love that he lets us choose and lets us have **responsibility**".

Y7MON310/11M6:

"Open challenges and choices most of the time I prefer but sometimes need to be told exactly".

Y7MON310/11F7:

"I did not use to like RE but now I have more **freedom** and that I have more responsibility".

**6.11:**

8Fri3M2:

"Has been the same, have paid more respect to him now than at the start".

8Fri3M7:

"I think he has become more relaxed and gives us more freedom e.g. the animations".

8Fri3M9:

"I think Mr Warren has become less harsh and more trusting over the years".

8Fri3M12:

"I have changed to sir because he is more friendly now than two years ago".

8Fri3M15:

"I think consistent because you have been the same to us from Year 7 and we have been the same to you. You treat us with respect and we treat you with respect back".

8Fri3F11:

"He has been consistent but changed only a little because he trusts us more. We've changed toward sir, we respect him more".

8Fri3F12:

"I think you have changed. You have become more fun to be with. I think I have changed, maybe more open".

8Fri3F13: "I think you trust us more now and know what we struggle with. We know your expectations and try to live up to them".

8Fri3F7:

"We have grown to respect you and we see you as a friend".

Y10THUR4F7:

"You have changed because you used to be quite mean but now you're funny and you are hardly ever strict".

Y10THUR4F2:

As I said it really annoys me when you try to be funny because well, you aren't. I will be honest up until this year I absolutely hated you, I think you probably hated me too, but now I think you're ace! You treat us with respect and you are an amazing teacher.

Blog diary notes for interactions with 'Rain Cloud':  
8 September 2009 (beginning of second research year):

Lesson 1:

"Had not taught any of these students in Y7. I was dressed in a 'fleece' as I aimed to be disperse any clouds that might have gathered outside the room at the cessation of break.

An established (whole school) Rain Cloud (by reputation) quickly emerged from within the crowd to challenge my instruction regards split gender table groups. Full of attitude and spouting the familiar 'whatever', this charming young lady's 'weather' was quickly countered by my adoption of 'water-proofs'. An immediate response which established I was not interested in her opinion (I was not seeking her agreement), was followed by deliberate silence and *selected eye contact* as I scanned the class settling so to create very clear boundaries, which they accepted. The power was established in the silence and inner confidence that exuded from it. I did not feel threatened by this challenge although it did put me on my guard. The step from 'fleece' to 'water-proofs' was a small one. Clear directives (rather than requests) reinforced my authority and centred on symbolic detail as I *'described the obvious' – "still waiting for a couple...bag under table... thanks (language of appreciation and expression of expectancy) ... pens down... eyes and ears to the front. Thank you – good morning"*.

A strategic request for RC to close the door (as she was closest to it). Matter of fact enquiry of 'RC's name (with class watching in their silence) led to a mature, adult recognition from me that we had got off on the wrong foot – "let's start again from the beginning and give it another try". Fluent switch to 'fleece and then 'light jumper' as the climate was established and any threatening clouds had quickly dispersed".

L2:

"It was fair to say last week's RC was quiet today. A behaviour report and specific targets helped. I had it confirmed that her constant frown is her natural demeanour, as is her uncultured aggressive replies to any civil request. I shall have to be on guard not to take things personally yet will seek to amend her communication if it might be perceived as disrespectful".

L6:

"She 'rained' today for the first time in four weeks. This time an inquiry at noticing she had her book closed and head on table. Keeping away from 'why' I *'described the obvious and asked 'what should you be doing'?* I was met with a dismissive '... not bothered'. Great that's two of us then! Language of *'choice, strategic retreat, take-up time and return to redirect* prompted some sort of appropriate response. Was able to lean on the behaviour report which has become her second skin. Her noises are apparent to all as she left my classroom at the end to punch another child outside. Part of a family fuelled rivalry apparently! And there is me trying to teach the intricacies of research and mind-mapping!"

L8:

"First lesson after half term. 'RC' fully involved through-out".

This caused my research supervisor to comment on the research blog:

"It is time to rename Rain Cloud, perhaps. I see traces of a silver lining".

Reply:

"Quite right. 'Silver lining' was polite and quiet. Form tutor informs me she tends to push boundaries around the school and we are doing well if she at least lets a teacher get on with teaching. We

## Appendix 6C

certainly have that now. He says she is terrified of contributing in case she is seen to look 'thick'. I recognise this trait in many of them”.

L9:

“It has been a good three weeks since I delivered the last fragmented part of the unit. All enthusiasm seemed to have waned as the lesson started with a strong whiff of apathy.

This atmosphere was then challenged as a 'new' girl (NG) introduced herself.

'Where do you want to me to sit?' she asked.

Again I have been stitched up as a decision is made somewhere to add a child to an existing group. I have only enough room for 30 chairs and table spaces; NG makes 31!

Whilst in the process of trying to figure out if anyone was absent so I could shoe her into their seat, trying to find my keys to get her an exercise book it emerges that NG was with us in Y7, moved to another school and now she is back!

These additional unscheduled tasks prevent me from starting the lesson and now I am becoming aware that resident 'rain cloud' is keen to impress NG. Great! The delicate balance of an established group is about to be disrupted for the third time this year. It seems every time we take on another pupil they are the sort that take - take time and energy.

I placed NG on the edge of a full table with her back to 'RC'. There was nowhere else.

RC's little comments were becoming apparent and then drew a measured response from me. I then addressed NG who had turned herself into a position to converse with RC sitting at the back. I spelt it out clearly, “You are not to turn around to talk to 'RC'. 'RC' is not to distract you. No one is going to join this class and stop me from teaching and others from learning – no-one!”

Body position suitably amended we carried on.

The group, whilst compliant were established in their apathy by now. The [comparative] Friday group also exhibited silence whilst absorbing poignant lyrics from songs, but did so with a sense of absorption and engagement. Only the subtlety of noticing or at least sensing might have spotted the difference at a glance, however a chasm in attitude existed.

One final piece of interruption from 'RC' whilst I was in the middle of giving whole class instruction, “My pen's not working”, brought my words to an abrupt halt.

“So, who cares”? I was aware I was slipping into a tone and dialogue I recognised from an age gone by. She mouthed something back wrapped in attitude and the hook was attached causing me to react to the *secondary behaviour* rather than responding to the *primary* issue of pen/interruption. Acutely aware of her history of bullying peers and by having recently become aware of her success at 'playing' teachers since Year 3 (my wife taught her), I interpreted her tactics as trying to intimidate me. I made it very clear she was barely a teenage girl and I most definitely was standing against her without any fear. I could hear myself say it and felt the weakness of my condition.

I knew I had failed. 'RC' refused to do any work and just sat there with her book closed – defeated though defiant. There were no more interruptions and no more trying to impress NG. I could have sanctioned and removed her for not doing the work but knew I had had a part to play in the situation, even though I had been set up. I just resigned to leave her to it, resisting inclinations to enforce my normal procedure of maintaining standards at all times.

## Appendix 6C

I made my mind up over the weekend to pull 'RC' out of her class and make some sort of apology along the lines of "I regret... if I could have done it differently then ...". I would also look to restate the behaviour that started the issue (calling out, attention seeking, seeking to undermine etc.) and confirm it remains inappropriate. Rogers (1994) referred to this focus as '*repair and rebuild*'.

Felt quite apprehensive about doing so due to uncertainty of her emotional response and the possibility of stirring up the lesson for the teacher I would have to pull her from. In the end the class were not where they were timetabled to be and so the opportunity passed. Limited time to catch her before lesson tomorrow morning".

1 March 2010

"The opportunity presented itself as 'RC' arrived late.

I stood in the doorway and was able to steer her to stay outside. She was not best pleased, full of defensive anger it seems, but my tone quickly sought to disperse this before it had a chance to build.

I said my bit about if I had the chance again... would do it differently... fresh start...

There was not much of an acknowledgement but I hoped the intervention, in accordance to the responsibility I have as the adult, would go some way to enabling a safer [emotional] environment for the child.

Unfortunately all I had anticipated began to manifest as the lesson unfolded.

An opportunity to work in Colour groups saw NG make for 'RC'. Should I stop it? I wondered but decided against my instinct in the spirit of 'fresh start'. As the activities proceeded it became apparent the two were up for a social ('RC' now had an ally). Quick reinforcement of task (covered by doing the same for other pupils in the vicinity) fell on deaf ears.

Raising awareness of a reasonable consequence then followed as I made clear, "if you want to work together then I need to see..."

Deaf ear. 'RC', feet now up on chair doing next to nothing whilst NG is able to crack on whilst under pressure from her friend to be idle.

"Name ('RC') (*pause, eye contact*) you are not attempting the task (*describing the obvious*). Do you need help?"

No response, no acknowledgement.

I explain anyway.

She starts to use her pen to tear holes in her exercise book. I am aware but do not jump in. It is more important for me to continue teaching the whole class who are responding in various degrees to the group tasks provided. Within five seconds of addressing the class 'RC' begins whistling so to interrupt.

The short instruction finished I was able to turn to 'RC' and remind her (if she needed reminding) not to whistle when I am teaching. Backchat led to her being asked to leave the room.

"Why?" came the whine.

"So, I can speak to you; leave the room".

The grunt and defiant posture rose (*secondary behaviours*) but got no response from me.

I quickly moved NG back to her original seat and then followed the school policy of speaking to a student who

## Appendix 6C

had *time-out*. Clearly with her will firmly set against me, experience told me it would be folly to try and convince the child through reasoning. Instead, whilst positioned in the doorway so to maintain contact with the class, I gave a clear description of observable behaviours and reminded her of the context of a fresh start (which was about to be withdrawn).

Within minutes of re-admittance, a constant tapping of her pen accompanied my whole class reinforcement and the battle line was well and truly drawn.

'RC's decision to leave the classroom before the rest of the class cemented a lip service detention I was supposed to administer'.



Blog diary notes for interactions with Y10 Sub-group.

After initial calm and constructive lessons, all changed:

"This was a struggle from the off. Period 5, just after tutor time we had another 'madam' join the group. This one from a neighbouring school was looking for a 'new start... to overcome her previous difficulties', or so the email said last week.

Immediately her persona pitched herself against me, looking to see if I was a soft touch or not. The group's established 'RC' (SG) arrived, oh great they seemed to have already found each other!

The fire-fighting that followed was fascinating if I wasn't caught in the middle of it. All the power appears to be with the girls of this year group. The males are largely unobtrusive or immature 'boys'. The three main lads of the year group were each expelled in Y8 / 9 period.

The amount of over confident opposition to the tasks and my instruction was staggering. Peacocks strutting to let the new girl (NG2) know they too had credence in this town! They were willing to take a hit from me, in fact it seemed a definite strategy to confront me so raising their kudos. Even a girl (N) who had NEVER been anything other than delightful began to get in on the act.

They would have witnessed a calm, assertive, insistent adult who met each and every challenge by redirecting, issuing sanctions to register boundaries and putting them 'straight'. Inside I was spitting mad, every ounce of me worked not to prevent myself from 'losing it' and scaring the living daylights out of them. It left me in a state of flux as I was already exhausted from a desperately busy day leading into this final lesson.

The entire episode exemplified the fact that small changes (presence of new 'madam') can have disproportionate effects. Though dressed appropriately, my perspective and state (symbolic fog) prevented me from experiencing the inner calmness I would hope for. After all they are no threat whatsoever other than a challenge to my professional obligation to enable learning. However, my inner state begs to differ as it was reminiscent of an occasional nightmare I have where the class are out of control and won't listen to me.

I stuck with it and built upon the calmness I presented. Strategic placing of new girl, low level 'folding' task (explained in 6.9.2), a controversial case study that grabbed their imagination and the storm had passed. Brief 'showers' occurred but were quickly and assertively met. No pleading or second and third chances from me!"

7/10/09:

"Wasn't able to teach the Y10s this afternoon as a last minute notice informed us of House Competition games. It ended up I sat with the 'non-doers' in a classroom anyway. Fascinatingly, one of the group's (and school's) 'RC's, a young lady who, like her brother before her, dallies between helpless and obstinate in my lessons, was one of those in my charge. It so happens she was scheduled to be with me that very period if the House issue had not presented itself.

What an amazing difference. Gone was the growl, in its place a smile and easy demeanour. Chatting away with me and peers you would never have recognised the rude, obnoxious young lady I had previously encountered with my education hat on. It seems such a shame to spoil a good relationship by insisting she does the work next week when we resume our formal roles!"

14.10.09:

"I decided to take a risk today and operate primarily with my 'research hat' on. I was intrigued to observe how the lesson might manifest if I resisted the (easy) C1 sanction option (unless obviously appropriate), or repelled the temptation to assert my authority through shouting. My self-boundaries were focussed on using the techniques I espouse during behaviour management training in which I advocate a calm demeanour as one diffuses and redirects low level distractions.

## Appendix 6D

NG2 arrived with N and immediately got herself noticed. SG (the 'smiling girl' from last week's blog!) arrived later, non-uniform and a big commotion about the smell of BO in the room. And so the scene was set!

N was constrained by the House report she was on but was desperate to be part of the mini grouping. None of the other students seemed remotely interested in joining them as the clique probed for a platform to perform.

The strategy of undermining and distraction took on a variety of forms periodically throughout the lesson. An assertive 'C1' may well have laid down a marker but would have probably have been an over-reaction to any single incident and likely to have started a verbal, high profile protest from the individual (and her allies).

It was interesting at one stage to observe SG deliberately put on her gloves during the lesson (thus inviting the teacher to ask her to take them off) and then NG2 putting her scarf on shortly after (thus forcing the teacher to ask her to take it off!). Lots of eye contact between the two left N somewhat excluded as she yielded to a reminder that she was on report.

SG played her usual card of 'learned helplessness'. 'Can't do it, won't do it...' despite the teacher taking time to individually explain what he had already explained to the whole class, providing examples and encouragement. Her declarations of impotence moved beyond apathy in response to a resource that could hardly have been made easier. NG2 appeared to be coping well with the resource but found an opportunity to get the teacher's attention with the one aspect she couldn't get straight away, thus mirroring SG's strategy".

## Balances and Ratios

Site Code:21  
Client Code:20  
Form Code:B  
On: 27-10-2010

Central Balance	
Positive Being in Charge	123
Accounting	118
Positive Self Total	103

Fabulous Five Balance		
65		58
	59	
49		54

Being in Charge Balance	
Control	Care
114	87

Self Balance	
Socialised	Natural
84	86

Positive Modes Total	344		Functional Fluency Index
Negative Modes Total	145	=	2.37

Being in Charge Ratio	
Positive Total	
Negative Total	= 1.58

Control Ratio	Care Ratio
Structuring	Nurturing
Dominating	Marshmallowing
= 1.33	= 2

Self Ratio	
Positive Total	
Negative Total	= 1.54

Socialised Ratio	Natural Ratio
Cooperative	Spontaneous
Comp/Res	Immature
= 1.4	= 1.69

An example of a scheme of work converted into a narrative:  
Y10 'Capital Punishment.

- Should we have the Death Penalty in the **UK**?
- Would Capital Punishment **reduce** crime?
- What will **conditions** be 'inside' for a prisoner doing 'life'?
- Is Huntley a **victim**? What was his background like?
- Do you agree with '**retribution**'?
- Would you support **forgiveness**?
- Does Huntley still **deserve** full human rights?
- We shouldn't '**cross the line**' Do you agree?
- What do the victim's **parents** say should happen?
- Does Ian Huntley **deserve the death penalty**?



Deliberation in court now moves to discussion on an appropriate sentence. This probes different views regarding capital punishment or 'life' imprisonment as jurors debate behind the scene tasked to come up with a verdict.

STRETCH:

**Conversation 1:** Between you (Juror 7) and one classmate (Juror 8)

Should we have the Death Penalty in the UK?

Would Capital Punishment reduce crime?

FLEX:  
to  
follow



[Link to student sheets](#)

Jurors 7 - 12





## STRETCH








**Conversation 2:** Between you (Juror 7), Juror 8 and Juror 3


What will conditions be 'inside' for a prisoner doing 'life'?

Juror 3 gives insight into what Huntley's experience is (would be) in prison. She shows you extracts from a journalist friend and an email correspondence.


[Link](#) to example of lay out




## STRETCH






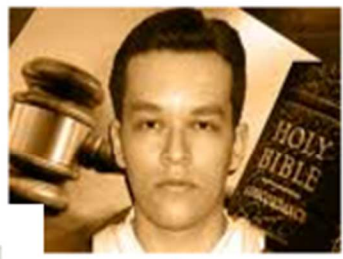
Jurors 7 & 8



Juror 3











**Juror 2:** A Christian who believes in retribution; has two young daughters

**Conversation 3:** + juror 2  
Before you can have a meaningful discussion you realise you need to know what he means by 'retribution' And what his beliefs say about this term

**Conversation 4:**  
+ one other classmate (Juror 9)





**FLEX**



STRETCH



Juror 6: Bishop of Litchfield

**Conversation 5:**


- + Juror 6 discuss with Juror 2.
- Juror 6 presents a different angle to the Christian teaching expressed by Juror 2.
- 6 speaks of **forgiveness and reform**.
- He emphasises the **New Testament** whilst Juror 2 quotes from the **Old Testament** and advocates **retribution**.
- Let's listen in to what is said and then return to develop the Jury's growing debate.

and any others from 3, 7, 8 & 9 who have an opinion on this particular conversation





FLEX to follow






STRETCH

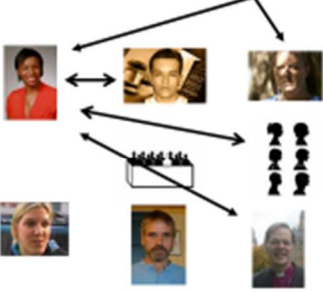


Juror 1: Eulette Ewart

**Conversation 6:** Juror 1 joins the discussion.

She begins to talk about **Human Rights and Amnesty International**. Does this apply even to Huntley and Carr you wonder? You will have to listen carefully before getting involved in a reply. The other Jurors listen intently. Who will agree with her?





Jurors 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9 engage with her.

Jurors 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12 look on saying nothing.

STRETCH

Juror 4: Primary Teacher

**Conversation 7:** Juror 4 has something to say. She wants to consider the views of the relatives involved. She explores the possible opinions of the victims' family as well as those connected to the pair responsible for this murder.

FLEX to follow

STRETCH

Juror ?

**Conversation 8:**

You overhear one of the Jurors suggest the group need to consider Huntley's **background**.

Is it possible for a person's upbringing to have an influence on decisions they make as adults?

You sit and wonder before asking the opinions of Juror 10. How does it compare with your conclusions?





Juror 5: Actor Jeremy Irons

### Conversation 9:

Juror 5 has sat quietly through out the deliberation so far. Someone enquires whether he is the famous actor – he is.

What do you think? Juror 7 asks.

Juror 5 begins to make a passionate and persuasive speech.

You listen intently and then respond with your opinions on some of the points he has made.

Do you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with him?

Juror 12 joins in with the discussion.



FLEX to follow



STRETCH

### Conversation 10:

Go to Jurors 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12 (other chosen classmates)

**Check** to see if they have chosen the same 'strong' statements as you.

Between you **convert your selections into the final piece of the dialogue** as the group draw near to the final verdict.

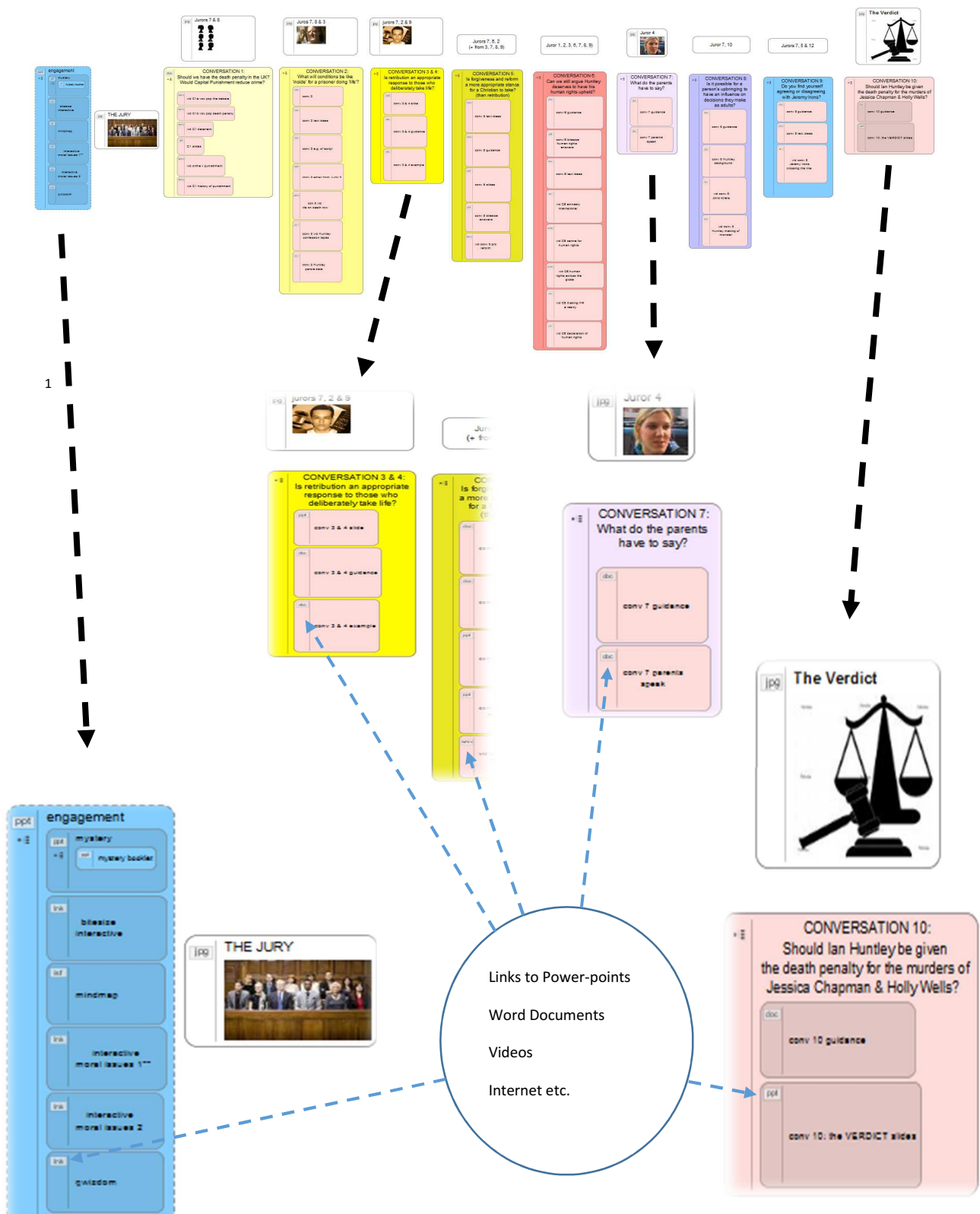
Be aware individuals will come and go as Jurors 8-12 add their views to different Juror 7s who have selected them. Be flexible.

Allow **other Jurors (1 – 5)** to **contribute** to the views made by your classmates (Jurors 8-12) as you conclude your script.





## Appendix 6F



<sup>1</sup> Whole Class are engaged, given context for the study and provided with the scenario. Pupils are taken through Conversation 1 and then are invited explore the Conversations in the order which best captures their interest with the proviso we all end up at Conversation 10 at the same time. A range of text / videos / internet links are provided on 8 computers using the Visual Understanding Environment (VUE) platform. I intercede on occasion with collaborative group & class tasks.

## **Lesson Structure and the PAR model.** All three elements are needed. They are often visited many times.

Page 409

### **Present**

Maximum 35%?

#### **Learning goals are explained**

- Objectives or goals are given
- Advanced organiser
- Persuasive account of the relevance and importance of the work

#### **New material is presented**

Knowledge, reasoning, theories etc are presented to students. Abstract ideas are illustrated with concrete examples

Skills are demonstrated e.g. how to use a formula, or punctuate a sentence. This stresses both process and product. Key points are emphasised

#### **Learning Strategies:**

- Listen to teacher talk
- Watch a teacher or student demonstration
- Watch a video
- Use resources such as hand-outs, CD Rom, Internet etc.
- Jigsaw or other cooperative learning strategies
- Teaching without Talking strategies
- Independent Learning
- Teaching by asking (rather than teaching by telling) e.g. group discussion

Learning is checked in progress

- Question and answer
- Looking at students' work
- Quiz, test etc

### **Apply Minimum 60%?**

Students are given tasks that require them to apply the knowledge, theories, skills etc. that have just been presented. This involves them in problem solving, making decisions, creating things such as posters or mind-maps

#### **Learning Strategies**

When learning a practical skill

- Practical task: (e.g. when learning a practical skill)

When learning cognitive skills

- Group discussion
- Case study
- Exercises, questions, worksheet, essay, etc
- Discussion to Develop an argument or answer a question etc.
- Decisions decisions game (good for learning concepts)
- Student presentation
- Critical evaluation of exemplars. E.g. are these sentences correctly punctuated?
- Peer marking or marking exemplars

#### **Teacher should:**

- Check attention to task, behaviour etc.
- Check and correct work in progress quickly
- Discover those who need help and provide this
- Praise and encourage: effort, progress, completion etc. not just high attainment

### **Review** minimum 5%?

What was to be learned is summarised and clarified, with emphasis on the key points. Especially important at the start and finish of topics and lessons.

#### **Learning strategies**

- Q&A: (Ask don't tell, as this checks learning)
- Create a mind-map, poster or hand-out that summarised the key points.
- Key points reiterated
- Advanced organisers
- Stressing the importance and relevance of the work
- Reviews at the beginning of a lesson
- Short task at the beginning of a lesson
- Key points at the end of a topic
- Reviews at the end of a lesson
- Peer explaining of key objectives followed by check by the teacher
- Quiz; test; etc.

<sup>1</sup> BLP refers to Claxton's (2002) Building Learning Habits (Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reflectiveness, and Reciprocity. PLT refers to Personal, Learning, and Thinking Skills (QCA 2009).

## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: SW	Subject: RE	Observer: GRS
Class: Y4	Stu Nos: Total Boys Girls	Ability: H M L (Mix) & higher ability
TA present: Y (N)	Date / Time: 28th Jan 2008 p3.	Length of Ob: 60 mins
Lesson context: Cuthbert RE Art-Carves		

**PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria**

Students review their own previous learning and learn from each other. → Teacher sets out exercise + models on 1 student. Encourages honesty. Allows student to share learning + gives them responsibility.

Students show interest in learning. → Teacher gives key terms + sets up "noticing" task. Praises those points as incentive.

Beds show evidence of a range of learning - scripts, mind maps, symbols, exam answers. → modelled by teacher with student. Calm atmosphere + idea that challenge is ok.

Students engage well in that role play on a difficult subject. → teacher constantly reinforces learning - explains higher order skills + emphasises difficulty.

Students are very aware of their own learning. → teacher breaks down a "poor" model exam answer. Exam answer with students explaining what's good/bad.

Students, as a class, enthusiastically evaluated a "poor" model exam answer. → teacher chunks learning, explains process + gives break.

Students maintain concentration despite difficulty of nature of work. → Broken down learning by teacher, engaged + challenges class.

Students cared themselves but there is confidence in having a go. → Teacher sets up structured key ideas.

Students are able to analyse an exam answer identifying relevant terms/key concepts. → test + returns to key ideas.

Students say they find learning challenging but accessible. They feel they are progressing learning. →

There is a very good, learning atmosphere - students are challenged + engaged fully in their own learning. They take responsibility for their learning, make progress and are aware of how they progress.

LESSON GRADE

Grades: 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate

VERSION 3 (From Jan 2007)



**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	0	
T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and G&T students	2	catered for through use of group work
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	0	

1 = Outstanding

2 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

4 = Inadequate

0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)

**PART C: Performance Management Focus**

N/A

VERSION 3 (From Jan 2007)

## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: SW	Subject: RE	Observer: GRS
Class: 9 - Higher ability	Stu Nos: Total Boys Girls	Ability: (H) M L Mix
TA present: Y / N	Date / Time: 4/6/08	Length of Ob: 60 mins
Lesson context: First lesson on contraception		

Students	Because of...
<b>PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria</b>	<b>Result of</b>
Students enter calmly + immediately prepare for work	very good established routines
Students are engaged in noting	Teacher sets up short task + challenges noting skills
Students are intrigued + draw upon previous knowledge	Chaos given, challenge laid down, key words given, then modelled by teacher
Work in 1st part of lesson draws on previous knowledge + seeks to overcome problems of previous lesson having occurred like half term.	
Students come up with own questions for lesson studying progress	prompted, modelled by teacher
Students engaged + motivated in previous work from start of break, established routines	
Students use very good specific own knowledge to answer questions	
Whole class Q + A (short-cut) on knowledge - then test of noting skills - students are engaged + appear challenged	
Students use both recall + engage on more open-ended higher order thinking	Combination of previous knowledge, individual, whole class + partner tasks, noting skills focus on challenge + that it's ok to be 'wrong'
Students use a range of resources to develop creative but knowledgeable response	Teacher points out resources + gives key terms. Emphasis on challenging students. Success criteria presented
Teacher maintains interest by adding extra information	
Checks on success by asking students to state whether key words have been used	
Students are able to draw on knowledge long since previously learned, and, with prompts, develop analytical answers.	
Students use recall, noting, synthesis of information, analysis of ideas, categorising + peer assessment	

LESSON GRADE		1
Grades:	1 = Outstanding	2 = Good
	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Inadequate

## Lesson Observation Feedback Form

Teacher: SW Subject: RE Observer: CPS

Class: 9 Date / Time: 4/5 p3

General evaluation using Ofsted criteria

LESSON GRADE 1

1 = Outstanding      2 = Good      3 = Satisfactory      4 = inadequate      0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)

Focused evaluation against JMHS Standards for Learning and Teaching

	Standards for Learning	Grade		Standards for Teaching	Grade
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and Gifted and Talented students	2
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	0	T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	0

What works well:  
Overall

Even better if:

Performance management focus



## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: S Warren	Subject: RE	Observer: GRS
Class: QCSB	Stu Nos: Total 25 Boys 15 Girls 10	Ability: H M L (Mix)
TA present: Y / (N)	Date / Time:	Length of Ob: 60 mins
Lesson context: Part of a series of challenges to build towards a focus of judging action		
<b>PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria</b>		
Well established routines, good relationships Class enter quickly, focused are quickly with the teacher preferred to begin lesson		
Students are made very aware of the skills they are using (collaboration)	Teacher raises key words + discusses them	
Students show high degrees of motivation and take responsibility for their learning	Teacher sets idea of challenge with competition, idea of mystery and clear rewards + penalties for good learning	
Students work independently + are self-motivated	Teacher allows + guides students towards independence by giving different students responsibility	
Interest is maintained throughout	Teacher uses "info" cards to set new challenges + set targets	
There is a lot of collaborative work in groups and whole class - they are motivated to work better	Use of students to aid collaboration focus on how to collaborate Teacher puts emphasis on students to make improvements	
Teachers + students are constantly aware of who understands + who needs help	Use of flip cards to seek understanding. Allow teacher to help. Allows student to comment + help each other	
Students are aware that they should get stuck and that they can get out of it - this motivates them	Gentle teacher guidance. Teacher focuses on how the students can get out of problem + whether they are a number of ways of doing this. Points to how other classes have done this (competition)	
Students say they enjoy lessons they are interested they are challenged they talk about the skills they use	Teacher sets up competition, a variety of tasks, emphasis on CHALLENGE, INDEPENDENCE + thinking very student + learning focused	
Excellent teacher student relations - motivated	Given independence, rewards, motivation	
Students identify their skills + target improvements	Total focus on skills, idea of go better, time to reflect + student learn from each other	
Students interpret ideas on a mind map	Encouraged to be creative, use of reward for good work	
Skills in this lesson: INDEPENDENCE, solving problems, collaboration, create, interpretation, research, Critique, evaluate, judge, link to		
Overall theme - advice, plan - evaluate + Synthesise information + reach judgements		
LESSON GRADE <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1</span>		
Grades: 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate		

Questions from group show very high questioning + interest + understanding (plenty)

VERSION 2 (From Sep 2006)

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Overall focus: "independence, collaboration, synthesis, evaluate, skills awareness"



**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	0 N/A	

T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and Gifted and Talented students	1	Through collaboration 1 hour or "do you understand"
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	See "for it cards"
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	0 N/A	

Grades:

1 = Outstanding	2 = Good	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Inadequate	0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)
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VERSION 2 (From Sep 2006)

PLEASE COPY TO MS

## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: <i>SW</i>	Subject: <i>RE</i>	Observer: <i>LP</i>
Class: <i>Y6</i>	Stu Nos: Total <i>28</i> Boys <i>8</i> Girls <i>20</i>	Ability: <i>H</i> M L Mix
TA present: <i>Y / N</i>	Date / Time: <i>26/2/09</i>	Length of Ob: <i>60 min</i>
Lesson context: <i>2nd lesson on concept of 'just war'.</i>		

**PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria**

*Calm entrance, students prepare themselves, well established teacher structure is geared towards learning. Routines + clear explanation in*

*Lesson objectives + topic objectives + outcomes are explained + recorded + linked directly to activities.*

*Use of video + captions makes learning activities very clear. Use of traffic lights allow teacher to have input where it is needed.*

*Use of competition between groups in class increases motivation.*

*Students are challenged + interested in the tasks taking responsibility for learning. Range of resources, competition, clear explanations, music, giving students the responsibility, use of captions.*

*Use of records for specific work increases motivation.*

*High levels of collaboration + resourcefulness shown.*

*Students touch-on and get the first outline of the key concepts that they will analyse later on in the course. The initial objectives today will be further investigated as the topic unravels.*

*Students have shown excellent collaboration + excellent resourcefulness. They are very engaged + highly motivated.*

*Teacher directs + manipulates groups to ensure those making less progress are able to improve.*

LESSON GRADE		<i>1</i>
Grades:	1 = Outstanding      2 = Good      3 = Satisfactory      4 = Inadequate	



**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	collaboration research
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	Synthesising strategy as well as problem solving. Others develop through process
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	Fully responsible for learning
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	Model lesson for this
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	0	
T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	clarity of methods used
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and G&T students	1	By outcome, group work, teacher intervention
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	Students take responsibility
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	Use of traffic light cards
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	0	

1 = Outstanding

2 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

4 = Inadequate

0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)

**PART C: Performance Management Focus**

<p>Performance Management Focus</p> <p>1. Identify the standards that the teacher is expected to meet.</p> <p>2. Identify the evidence that the teacher has provided to show that they have met these standards.</p> <p>3. Identify the areas for improvement and set targets for the next period.</p>
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VERSION 3 (From Jan 2007)

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## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: <u>SW</u>	Subject: <u>RE</u>	Observer: <u>GRS</u>
Class: <u>9CP</u>	Stu Nos: Total Boys Girls	Ability: H M L <u>Mix</u>
TA present: Y / <u>N</u>	Date / Time: <u>28 June</u>	Length of Ob: <u>60 mins</u>
Lesson context: <u>Students have foundation knowledge on euthanasia - building process evaluation</u>		

Teacher	Students
- Has well established routines on entrance to room.	- Enter quickly, quietly + quickly prepare to learn.
- Uses hand signals to check previous learning.	- Students draw upon previous learning.
- Gives picture of video and ask students to notice when euthanasia becomes a drive.	- Students see whole picture, work collaboratively + notice <del>different</del> changes.
- Asks students to notice words used in video. Models 1st part.	- Student draw back on experiences, worked together.
- Sets class in competition groups after calm pen approach. <del>Then</del> gives students responsibility for own learning.	- Students are engaged + well motivated. All students want to give answers. They feel confident in doing so.
- Asks students to create questions. Models higher order questions.	- Students create a variety of open questions.
- Gives break after 25 mins. This appears to be a routine.	- Students come back to learning enthused + settle quickly.
- Uses students as "trainee teachers".	- Take further responsibility for learning. <del>Enthusiasm</del> .
- Teacher models <del>teaching</del> different parts of film - dissecting +	- Students able to describe how this works.
- opportunities available for questions.	- Students are interested. Some very sophisticated questions created.
- Allows group leaders to get ideas for questioning.	- Allows students to take responsibility.
- Asks students who have finished to further learning.	- Students share ideas + almost teach each other.
- Contains + team/term competition used to keep disruption & noise level to minimum.	- Students work at their own pace.
- Students asked to accept + respond to others work.	- Students quickly get in task. They clearly enjoy their learning. See it as interest rather than a duty.
- Allows students to reflect on outcomes (not told to students).	- Draw upon previous learning + reflect + create. Empathise.
- Students always in orange zone, progress beyond what is expected. Students take a lot of responsibility for learning, engaged in analysis + builds towards synthesis + evaluation. enjoys the work and almost always active in learning, differentiated through groups, did evaluate what doing.	- Students reflect on lesson - they analyse their own learning.

LESSON GRADE <u>1</u>	
Grades:	1 = Outstanding      2 = Good      3 = Satisfactory      4 = Inadequate



**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	on journey towards this
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	mostly analysis
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	0/NB	

T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	on journey towards
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and Gifted and Talented students	1	Through peer help
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	0/NB	

Grades:

1 = Outstanding	2 = Good	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Inadequate	0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)
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VERSION 2 (From Sep 2006)

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## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: <u>SW</u>	Subject: <u>RE</u>	Observer: <u>LLS</u>
Class: <u>Y10</u>	Stu Nos: Total Boys Girls	Ability: H M L Mix
TA present: <u>Y / N</u>	Date / Time:	Length of Ob: <u>60 min</u>
Lesson context: <u>Intro lesson (after long break - pre Xmas) on Equality + Prejudice</u>		
<b>PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria</b>		
<u>Calm orderly start to lesson</u> ↔ <u>Routine + teacher talk with music + prompts (differentiation)</u>		
<u>Calm, orderly, focused approach from whole class</u> ↔ <u>Routine set-out. Very clear expectations set out by teacher.</u>		
<u>Students focus well on task - engage in emotional + academic demands of lesson</u> ↔ <u>Use of video to prompt thinking assessed by teacher. Good given with guidance offer of going to other peers for help.</u>		
<u>Students given audio, visual, knowledge + creative tasks they work individually, in pairs and as a whole class seeking best practice.</u>		
<u>Ideas were collected from the whole class - students were heavily engaged in the task.</u>		
<u>When time is finished, students quickly stop + listen</u> ↔ <u>Routine Students are engaged in tasks and are interested and motivated.</u>		
<u>Friday period 5 of slow week - but students are enthusiastic teacher gives time-out to recover. Students quickly re-focus. Even during break students talk about topic.</u>		
<u>Skills in lesson - knowledge (defining) interpretation of events; practising key features; using creative skills; sharing information; peer assessment</u>		
LESSON GRADE <u>1</u>		
Grades:	1 = Outstanding	2 = Good
	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Inadequate

## PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	Strong lesson - would go on to use techniques to synthesize
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	Case studies + evaluate causes & discrimination
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	Difficult creative task - fully engaged in
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	Excellent behaviour Fri (ps)
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	Early evidence suggests so - laid out plan.
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	✓	
T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	(see above for later plan)
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and G&T students	1/2	Early stage - but differentiated through support + outcomes
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	✓	

1 = Outstanding

2 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

4 = Inadequate

0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)

## PART C: Performance Management Focus

Outstanding lesson surpasses target & at least "Good" for these lessons.



## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: SW	Subject: RE	Observer: GRS
Class: Y10	Stu Nos: Total 23 Boys 11 Girls 12	Ability: H M L Mix
TA present: Y / (N)	Date/Time: 4/3/11 14:20	Length of Ob:
Lesson context: First lesson Introduction to death sentence		

**PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria**  
This section should concentrate on the new knowledge, skills and understanding, and ability to apply those skills that the whole class and groups of students within the class gained during the lesson observed. The groups of students may include lower, middle and higher ability students within the group or boys and girls or students with SEN. Any evidence eg from students' books or work of progress made during the course should also be included. The note should also refer to the actions that the teacher took to enable learning and progress to be inadequate, satisfactory, good or outstanding.

Students  
Students key deer on expectations - aware of balance between their role + teachers.

Teacher  
Sets out from beginning balance + expectations

Teacher introduces key words + concepts + illustrates some of these through some case studies. Checks on assumptions + makes it clear that these are just checks - expectation or opinion. Students define some key terms

Students of all abilities are engaged + appear motivated - there is good level of responses. Students who are reluctant to work are engaged. This is because they are asked for their own opinions - although this is combined with clarification/assumption testing of key terms.

Students undertake a tally chart of information. They appear intrigued by this information

Teacher sets up task with some challenge - Students given a model to follow.

Students raised a task throughout - very well raised

Teacher tells stories; gives breaks; uses video clip; stress on opinion; stress on assumptions

Students go on to further work in tasks + ability to f... into their questions; give inadequate answers; select resources; check and demand answers; compare + contrast views; synthesise understanding + draw substantiated conclusions

LESSON GRADE 1

Grades: 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate



**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standard	Grade		Standard	Grade
L1	Concentrate	1	T1	Classroom Management	1
L2	Care	1	T2	Explaining/Questioning	1
L3	Cooperate	No applicable to this lesson N/A	T3	Tasks, Activities and Resources	1
L4	Connect	N/A	T4	Pace and Challenge	1
L5	Contribute	1	P3	Lesson Planning	1
L6	Create	N/A	A2	Helpful Assessment	1
L7	Commit	N/A	A3	Motivating Assessment	1

1 = Outstanding

2 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

4 = Inadequate

0 = Not applicable

**PART C: Performance Management Focus if applicable**

Assessment - first time development - due to be set up as a base-line followed by end of term assessment.

**KEY STRENGTHS OF LESSON**

Long + Middle term planning towards goals  
Very clear explanations  
Focus on students taking responsibility

**AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT**

## Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: <u>SW</u>	Subject: <u>RE (Hindu)</u>	Observer: <u>LES</u>
Class: <u>8/11/14</u>	Stu Nos: Total <u>30</u> Boys <u>14</u> Girls <u>16</u>	Ability: H M L <u>Mix</u>
TA present: <u>Y / N</u>	Date / Time:	Length of Ob: <u>60 mins</u>
Lesson context: <u>RE - Buddhism</u>		

**PART A: Evaluation against Ofsted criteria**

Students come in calmly + quickly prep for lesson ← Teacher has established dm routines

Students reflects on previous learning + share ideas.

Lesson objectives are very clearly set out - mystery approach engages interest

Students gather own resources which challenge laid down by teacher  
 → Encourages students to consider the key skills + build on previous knowledge

Some students (middle ability) engaged in very high level philosophical concepts ← result of prompts + freedom + organic

Level of collaboration are very high ← result of focus + routines

Students engage in synthesis + metaphor  
 wide (group/whole) discussions seen ← Focus on group work, on energy +

Groups were given feedback on their RP skills - know how to improve

Students knowledge from resources was monitored + checked by Teacher talk + quiz

Differentiation occurred by outcome and by differentiated resources

Teaching - good adaptations from previous lessons based on previous learning

Students convert thinking into creative work that caters alternative views

Students collaborate, analyse texts, draw conclusions, synthesise info, creative use of info

**LESSON GRADE** 1

**Grades:** 1 = Outstanding      2 = Good      3 = Satisfactory      4 = Inadequate

**PART B: Evaluation against Learning and Teaching Standards**

	Standards	Grade	Point to note
L1	Acquire demanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding about the subject	1	
L2	Draw on higher order skills, such as analysing, evaluating, and synthesising	1	conversion; interpretation Synthesising, Creative work
L3	Engage fully in the intellectual, physical, and/or creative challenges of learning	1	
L4	Are highly productive through the effective and efficient use of time, adult / peer support and learning resources	1	Differentiated
L5	Behave well through consistently following school and class rules	1	
L6	Balance learning independently on their own with learning collaboratively with others	1	Peer help focus
L7	Understand what, why and how they are learning and know how they can improve	1	
L8	Extend and consolidate their learning through homework	✓	
T1	Explain and demonstrate the subject in ways that make it clear, accessible and relevant	1	Reviews frequently
T2	Select learning activities that require the use of higher order skills	1	Synthesis
T3	Set clear and demanding learning objectives, which are unpacked with students and referred to throughout the lesson	1	
T4	Provide effective differentiated learning and teaching activities that cater for the needs of SEN and G&T students	1	Differentiated by group & resources
T5	Insist on high standards of behaviour through consistent application of school's Behaviour for Learning Policy	1	
T6	Direct the flow of the lesson to ensure support staff, time, resources and ICT are used effectively	1	
T7	Check and assess students' work regularly, provide timely feedback and ensure that students act on this	1	
T8	Set challenging homework to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in lessons	✓	

1 = Outstanding

2 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

4 = Inadequate

0 = Not applicable (NB only for L8 and T8)

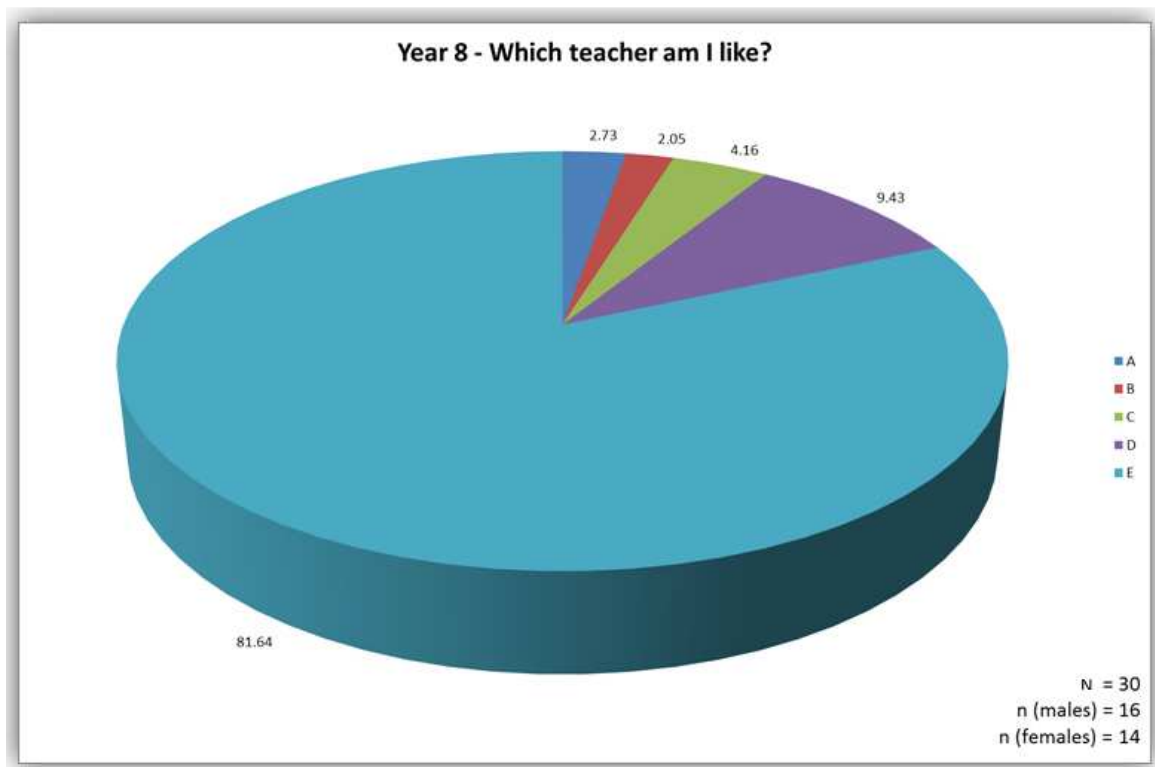
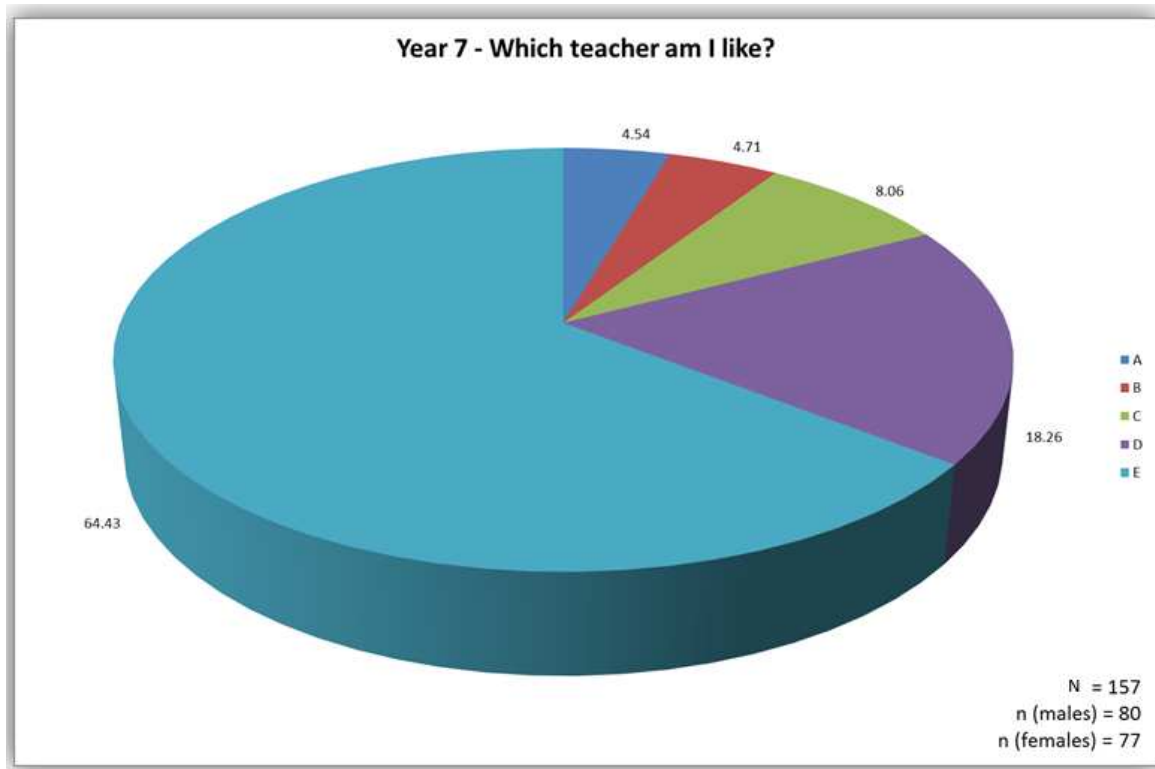
**PART C: Performance Management Focus**

Lessons are at least "Good"

VERSION 3 (From Jan 2007)

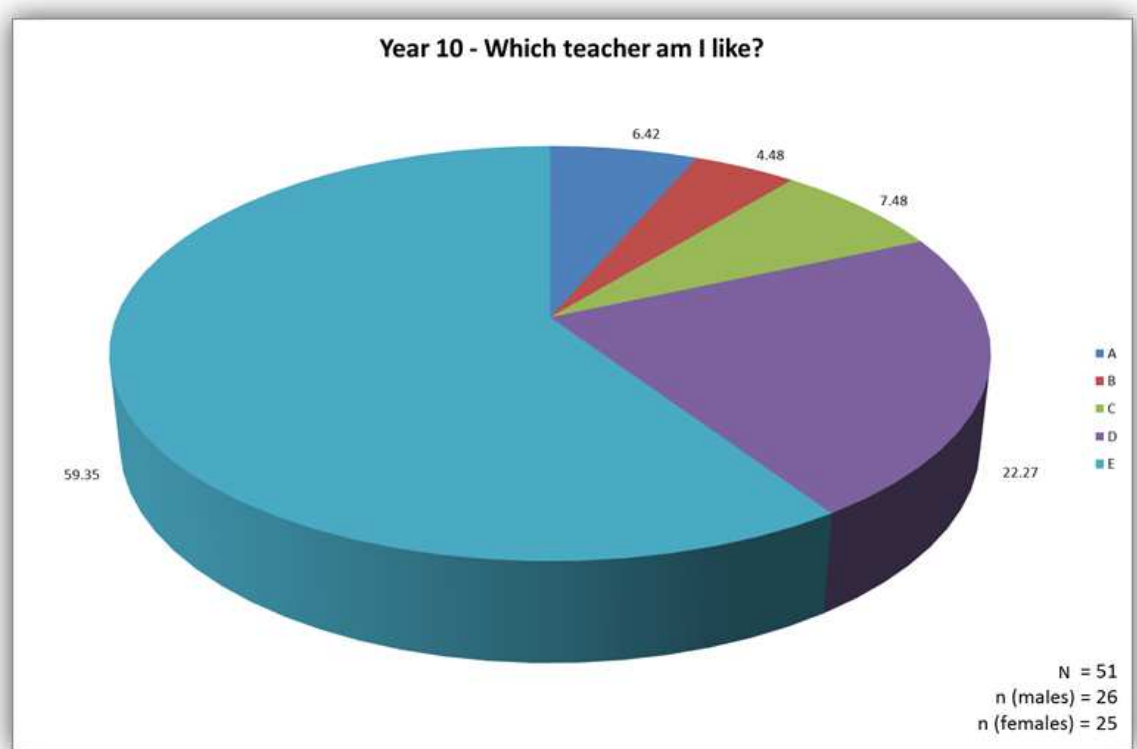
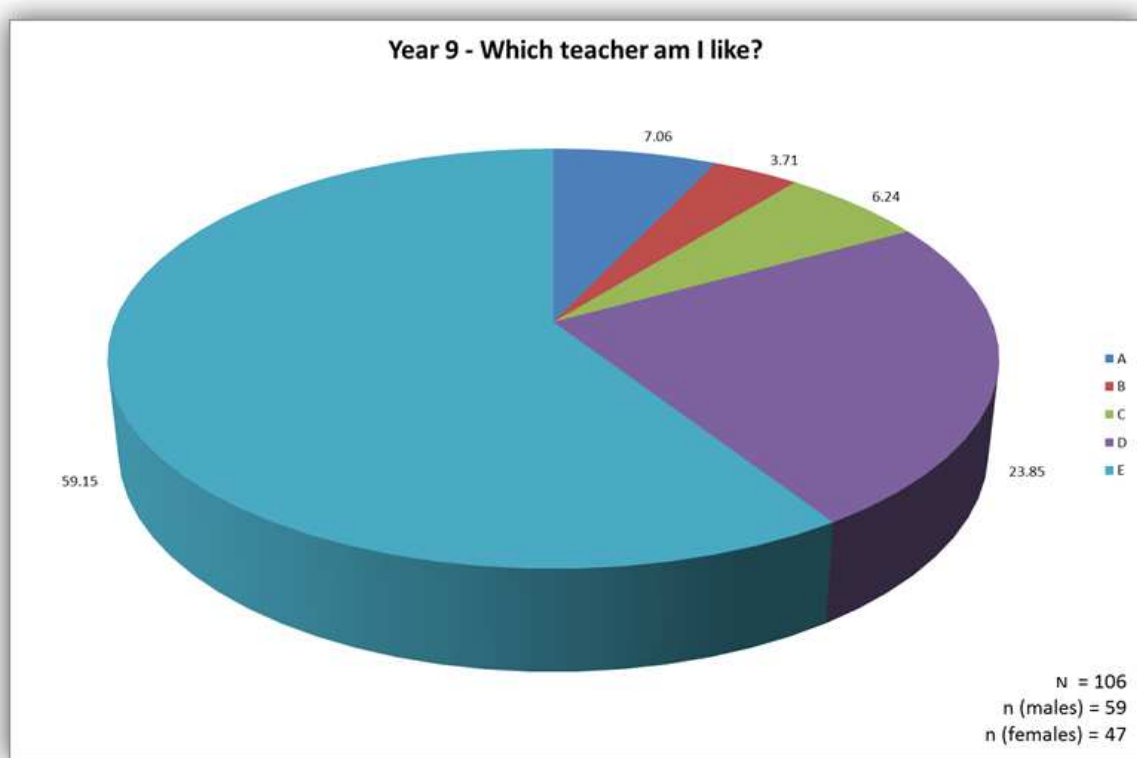
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## Appendix 6J

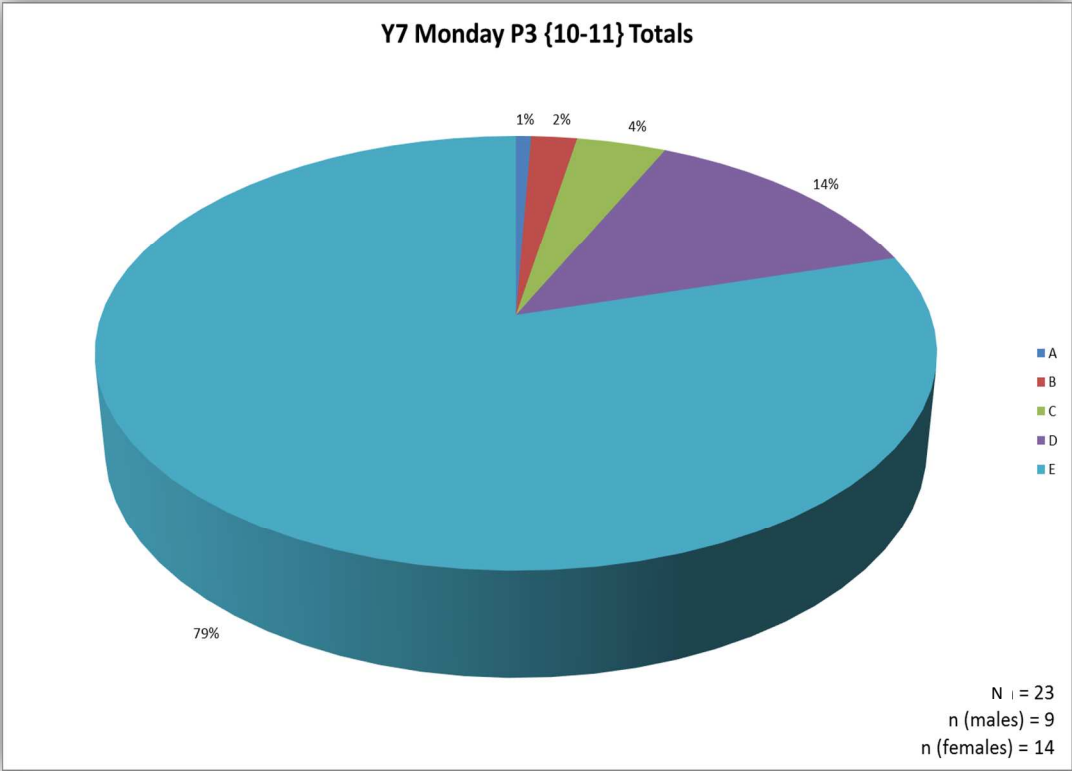
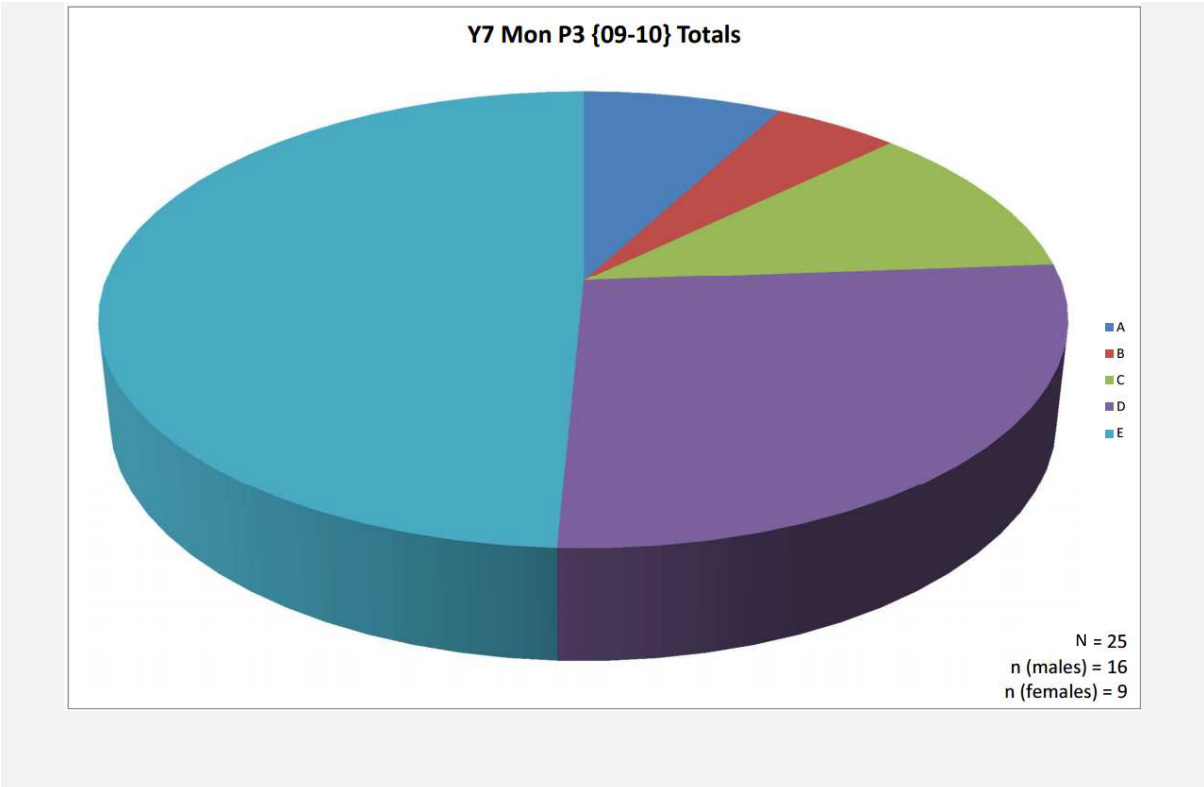


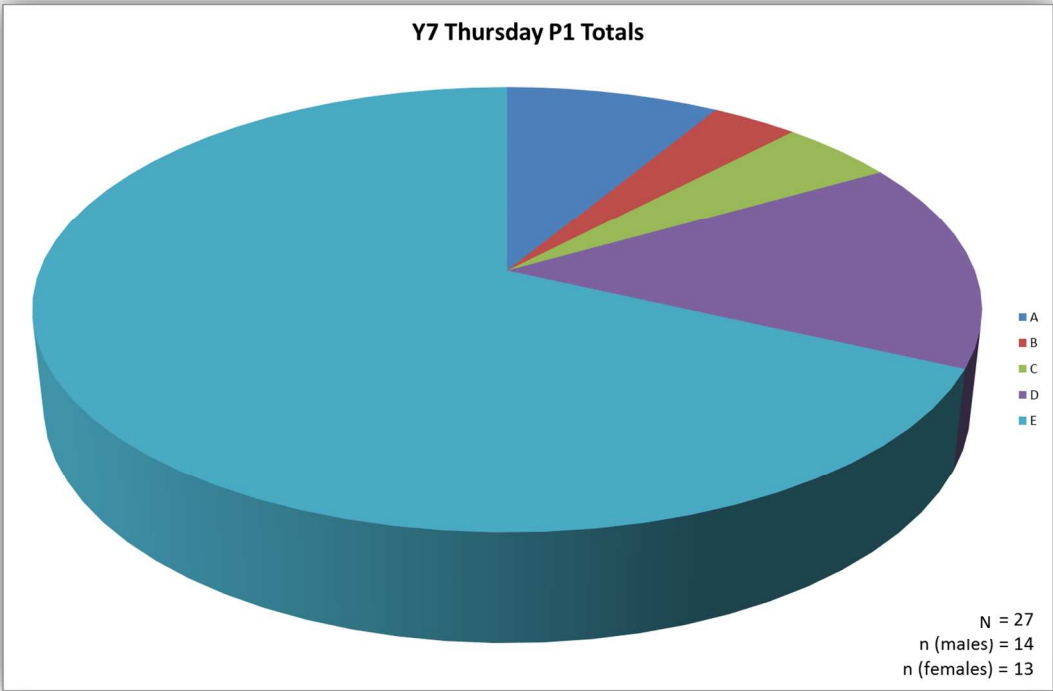
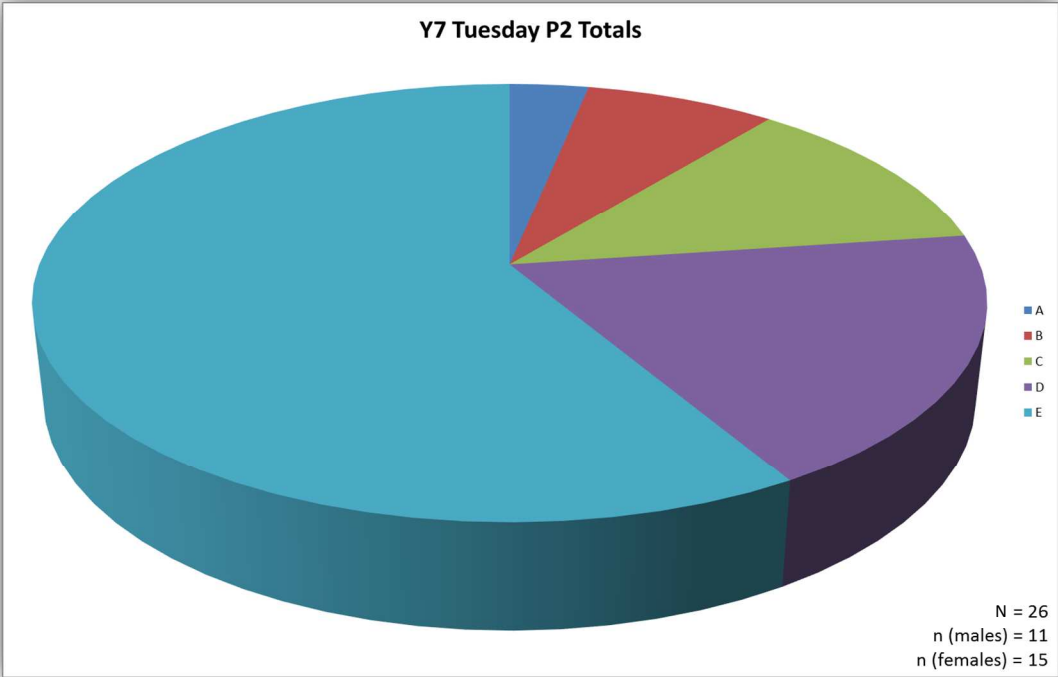


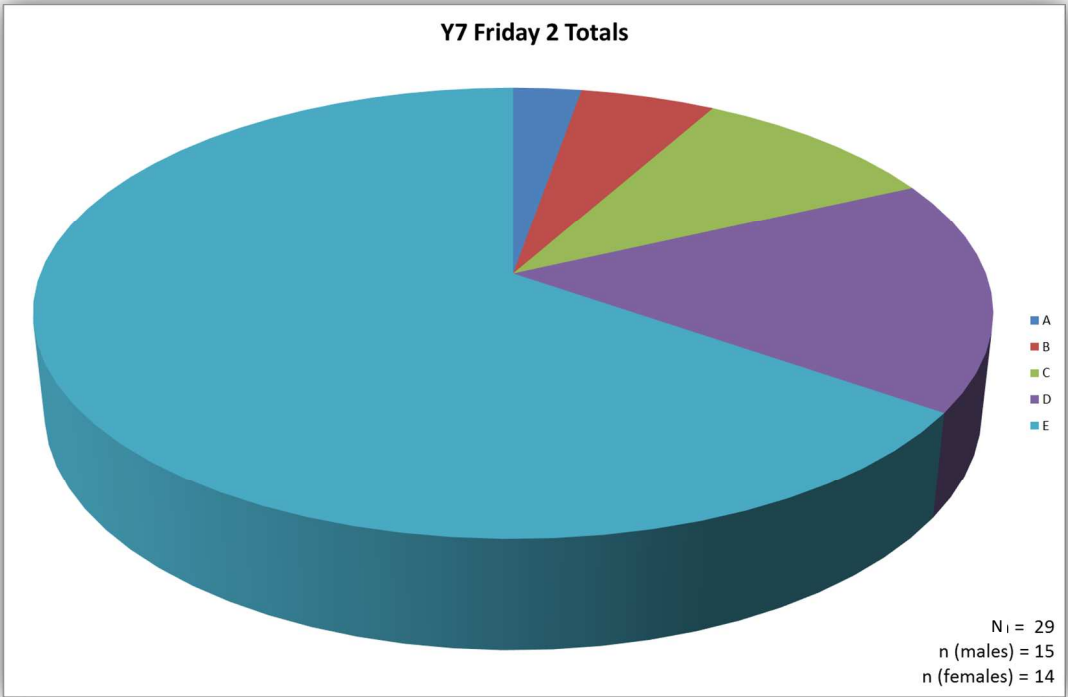
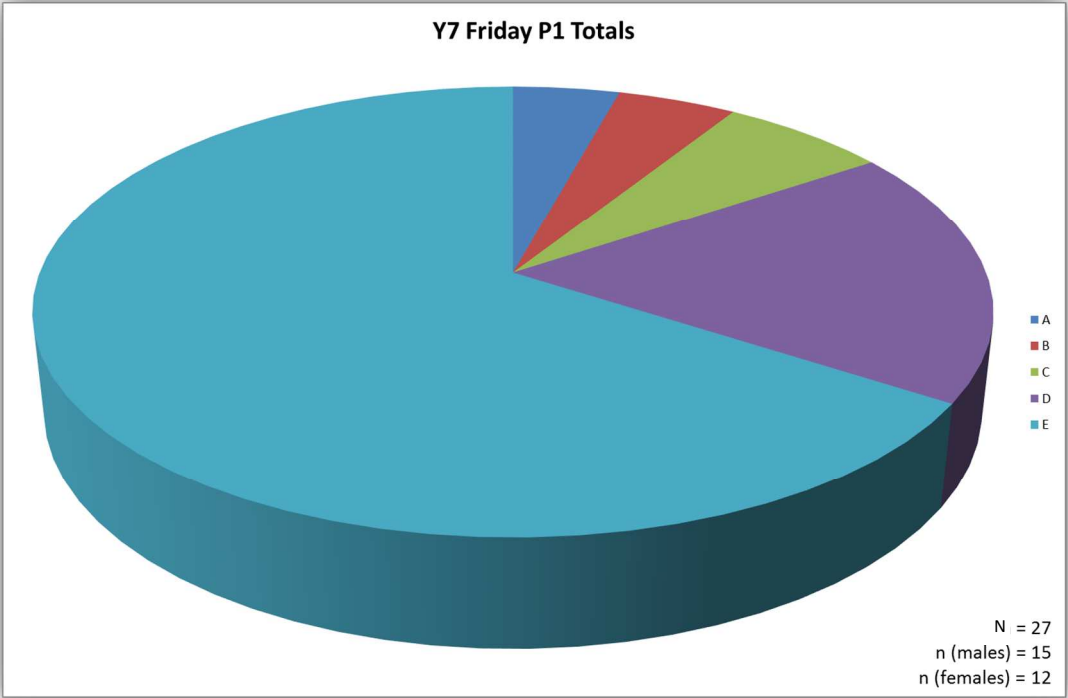
## Appendix 6J



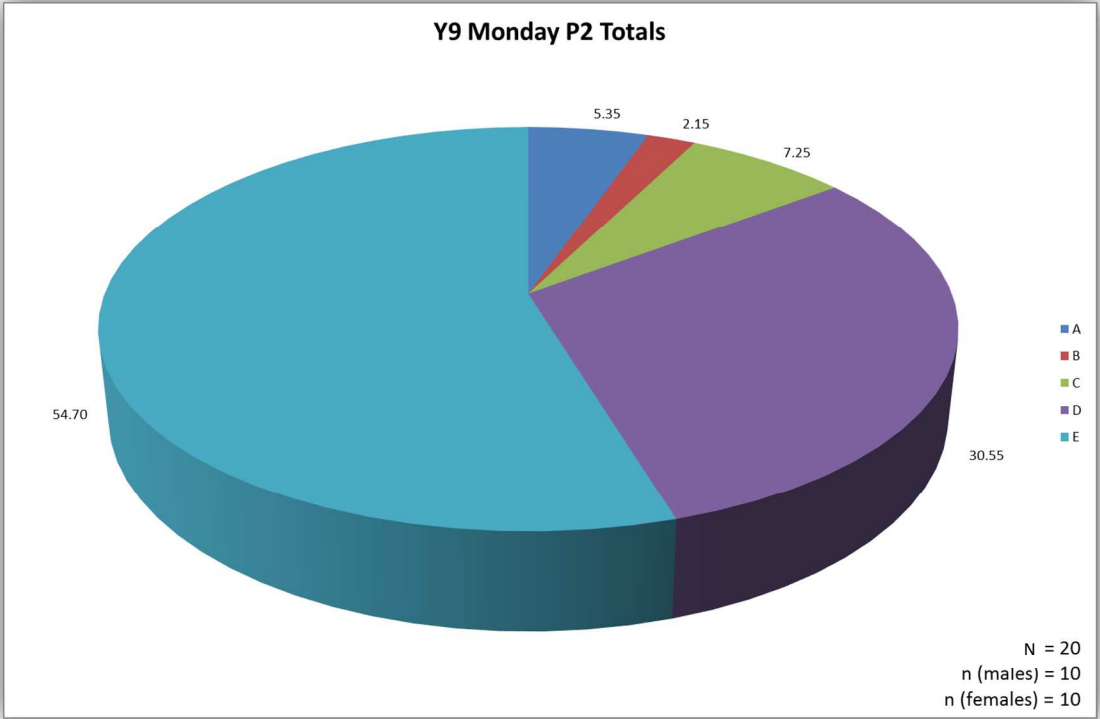
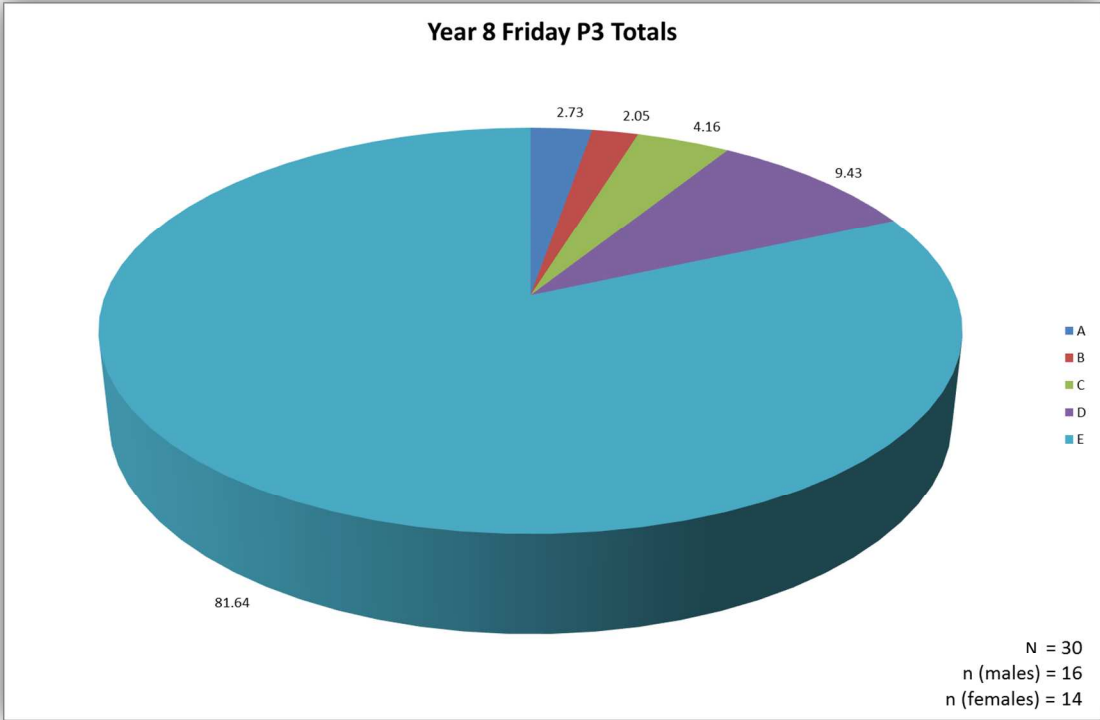
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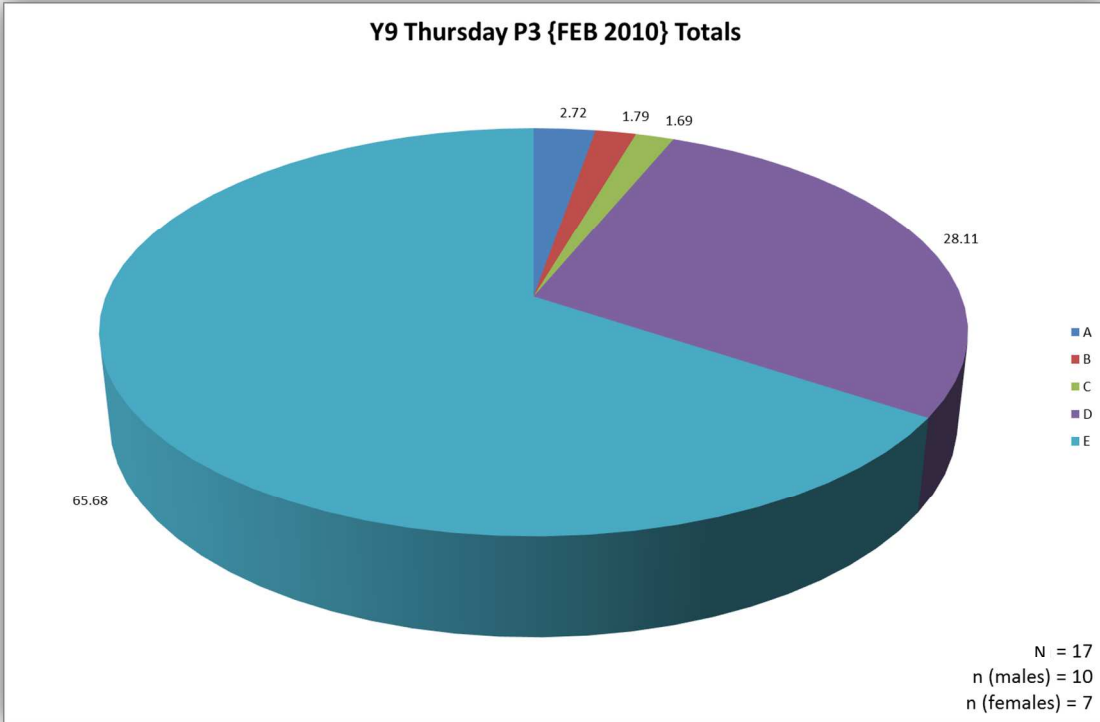
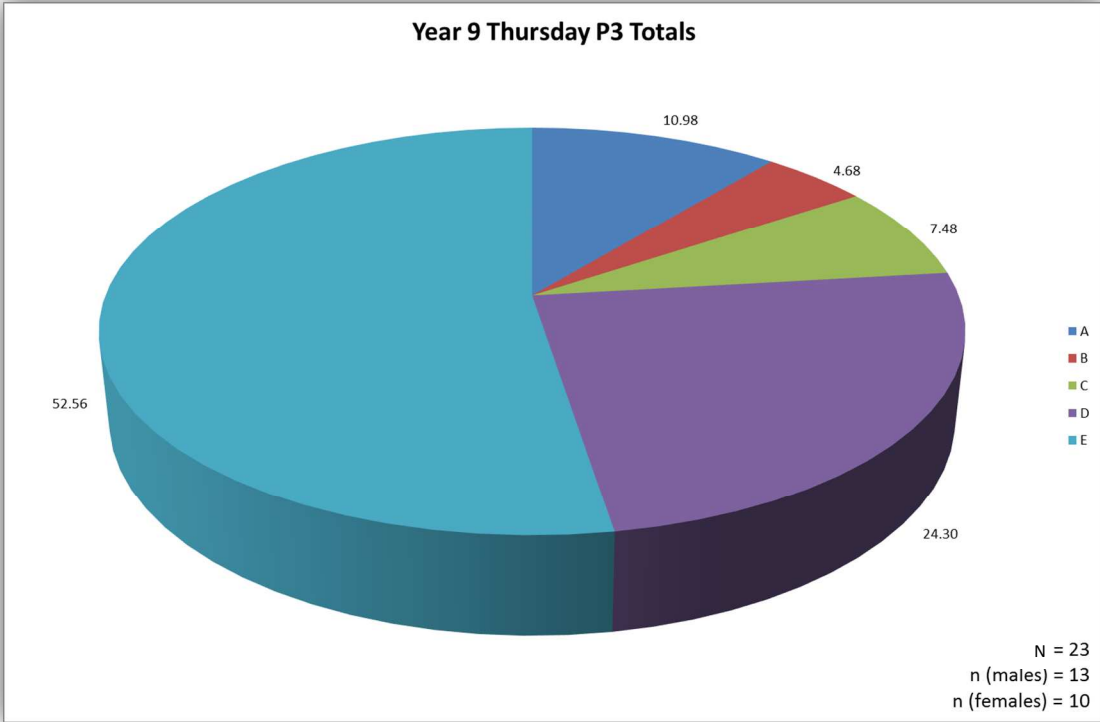


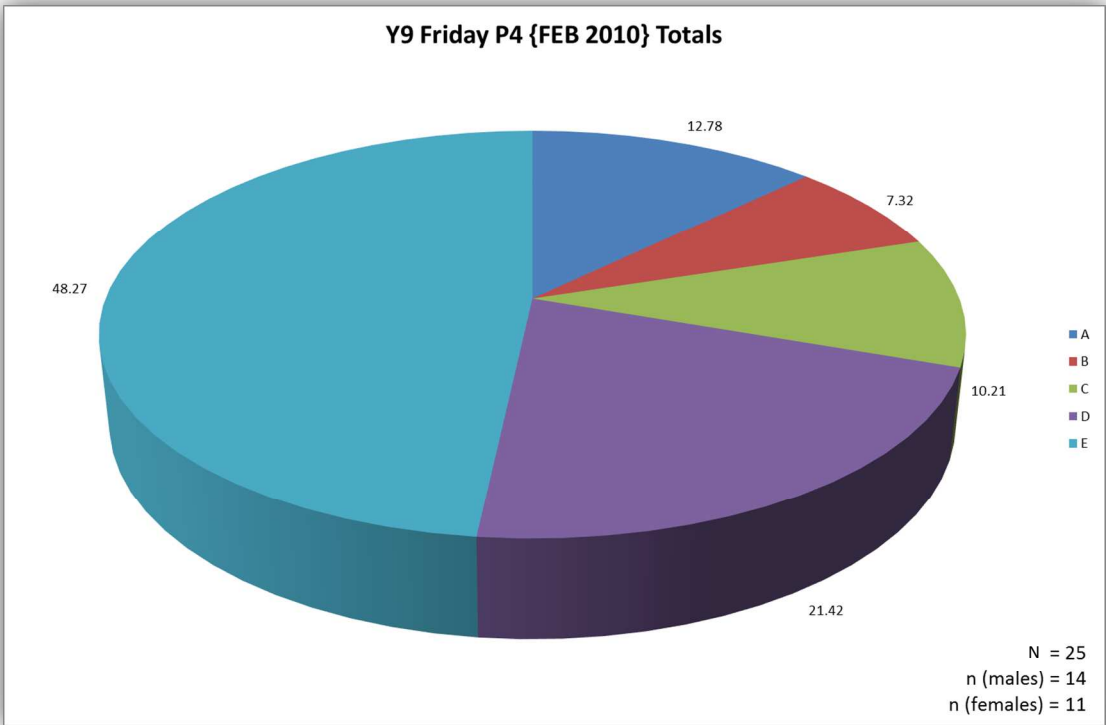
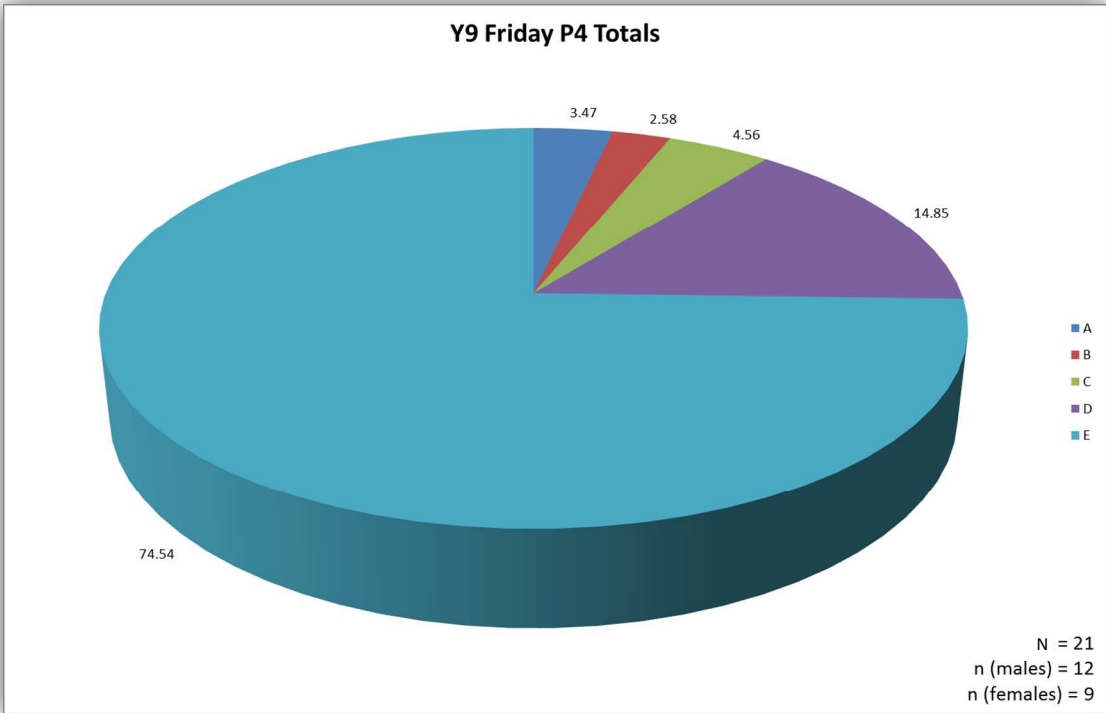


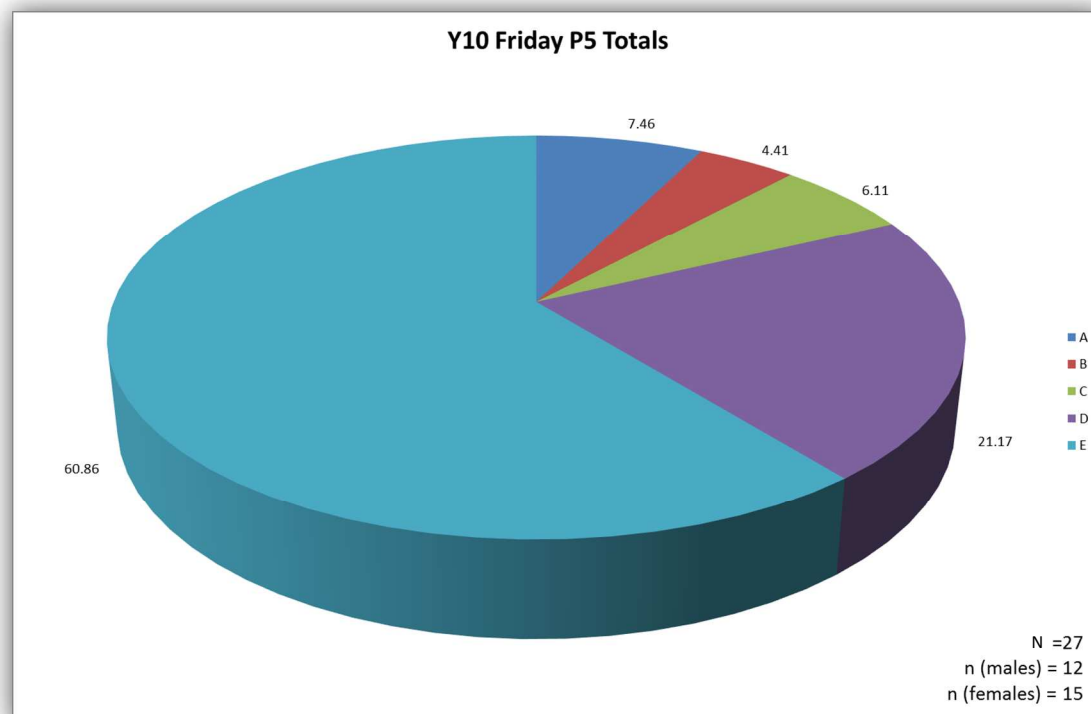
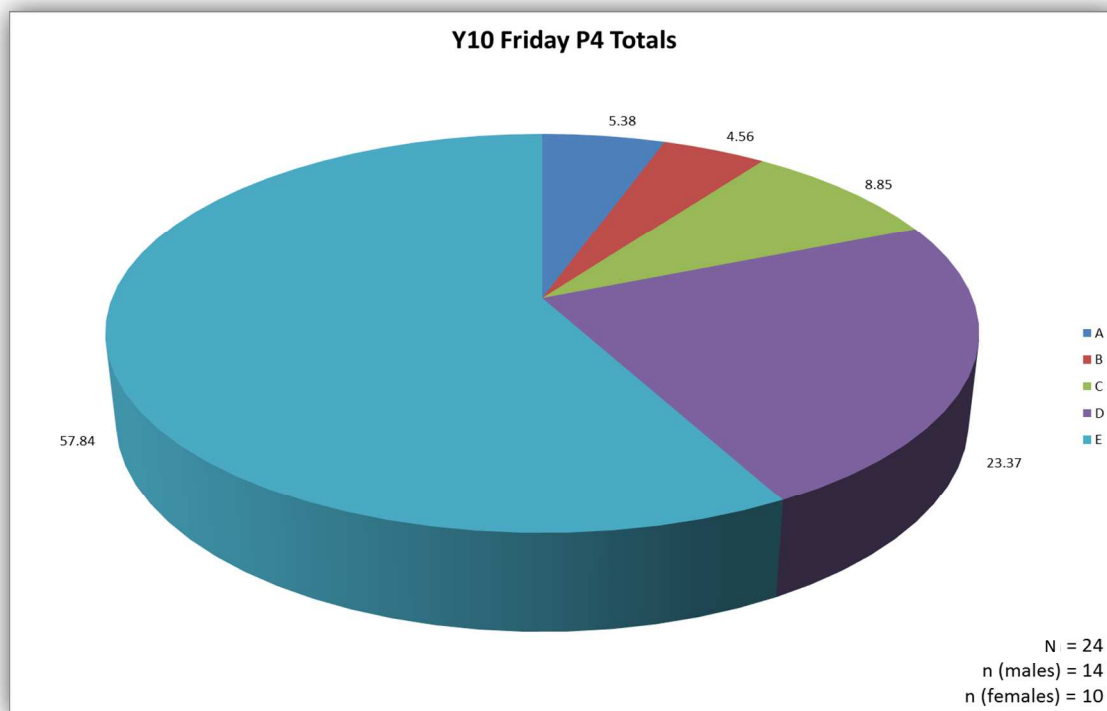






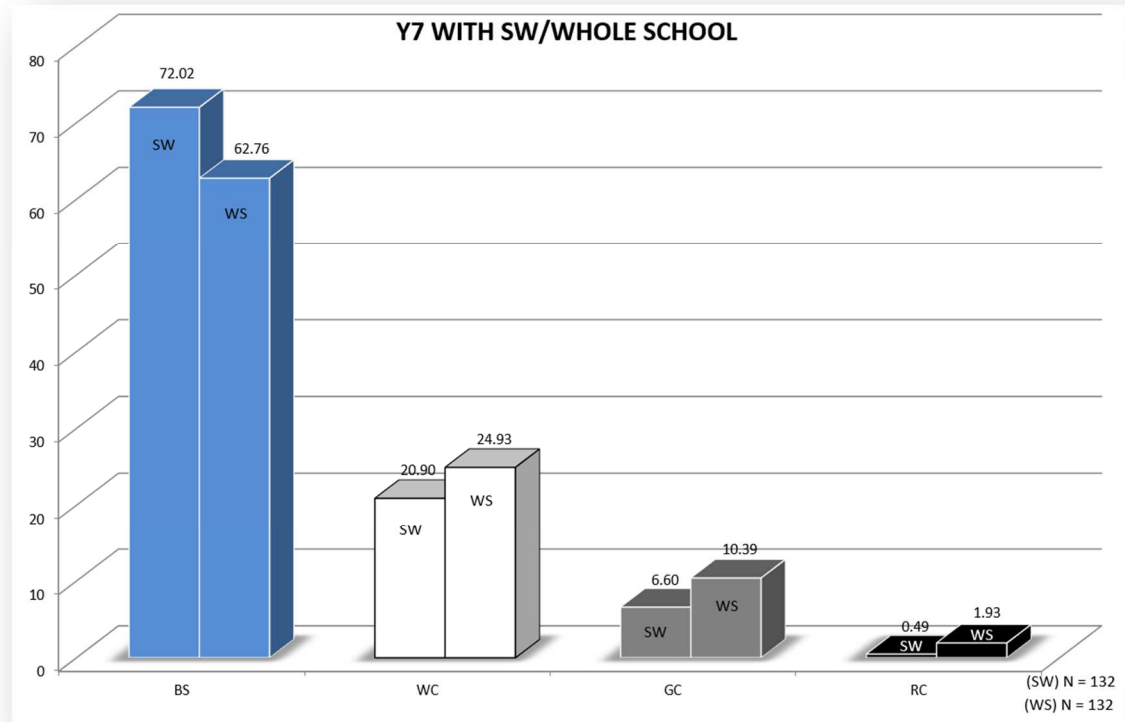




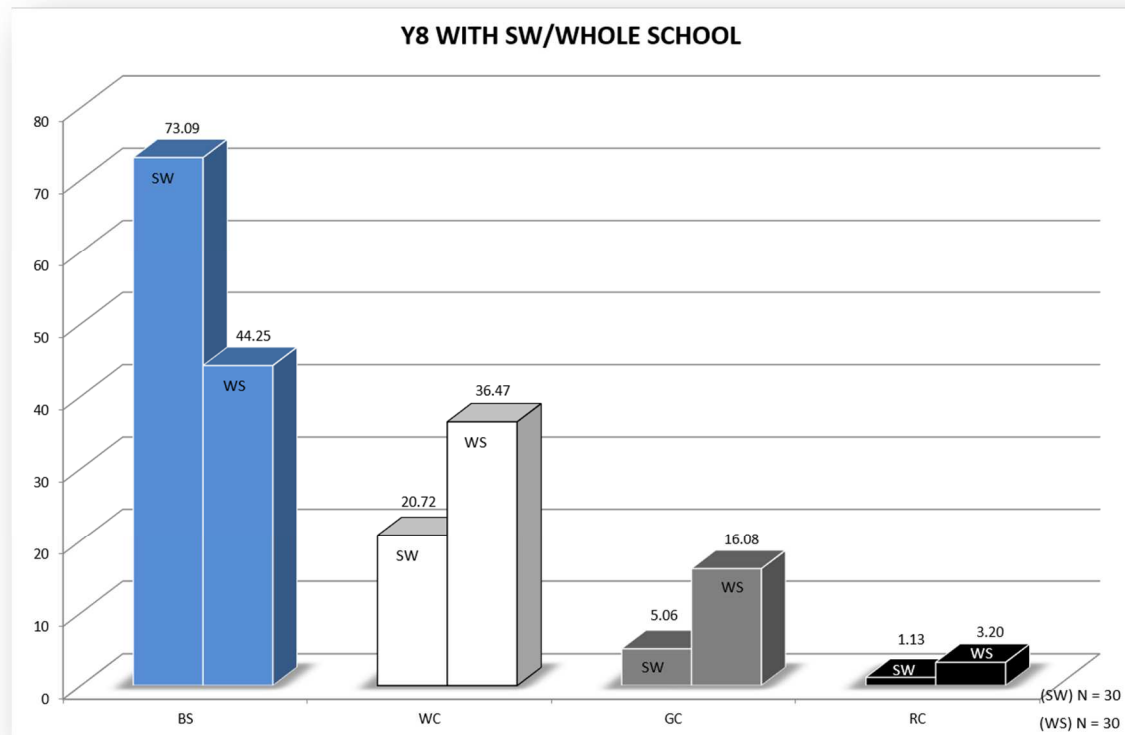


## Comparing Weather SW / Whole School: Year totals

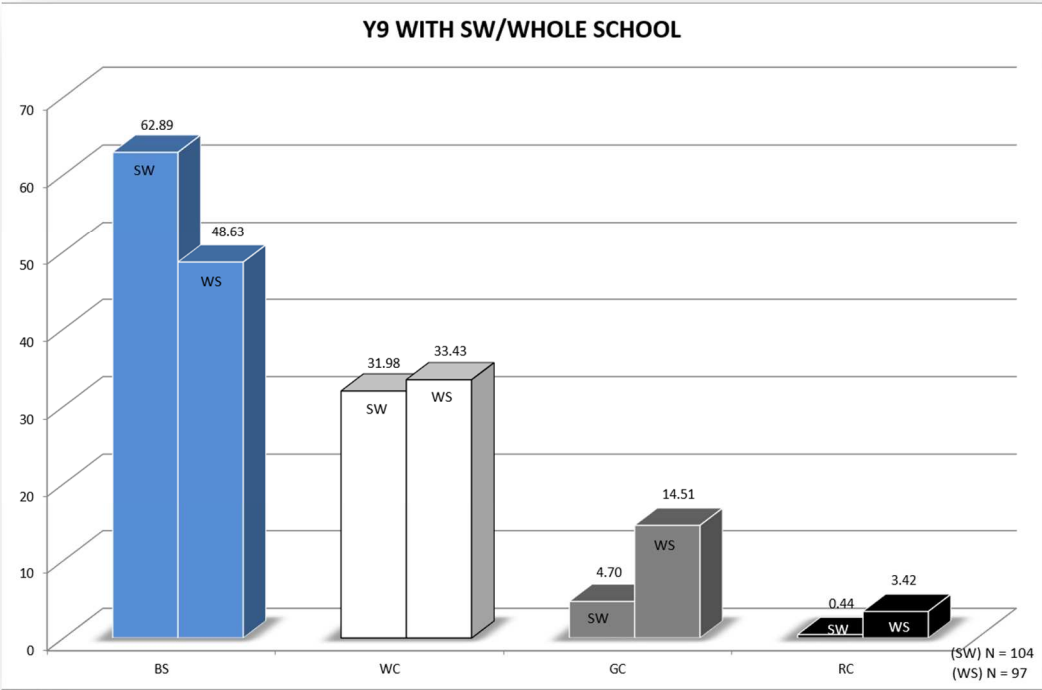
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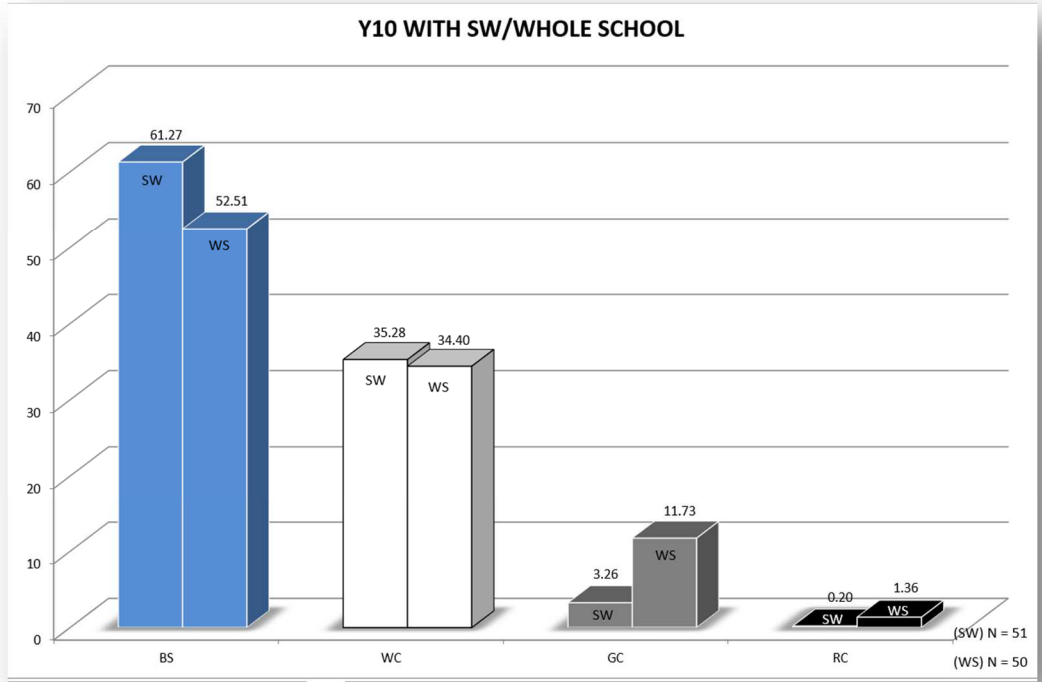
## Year 8



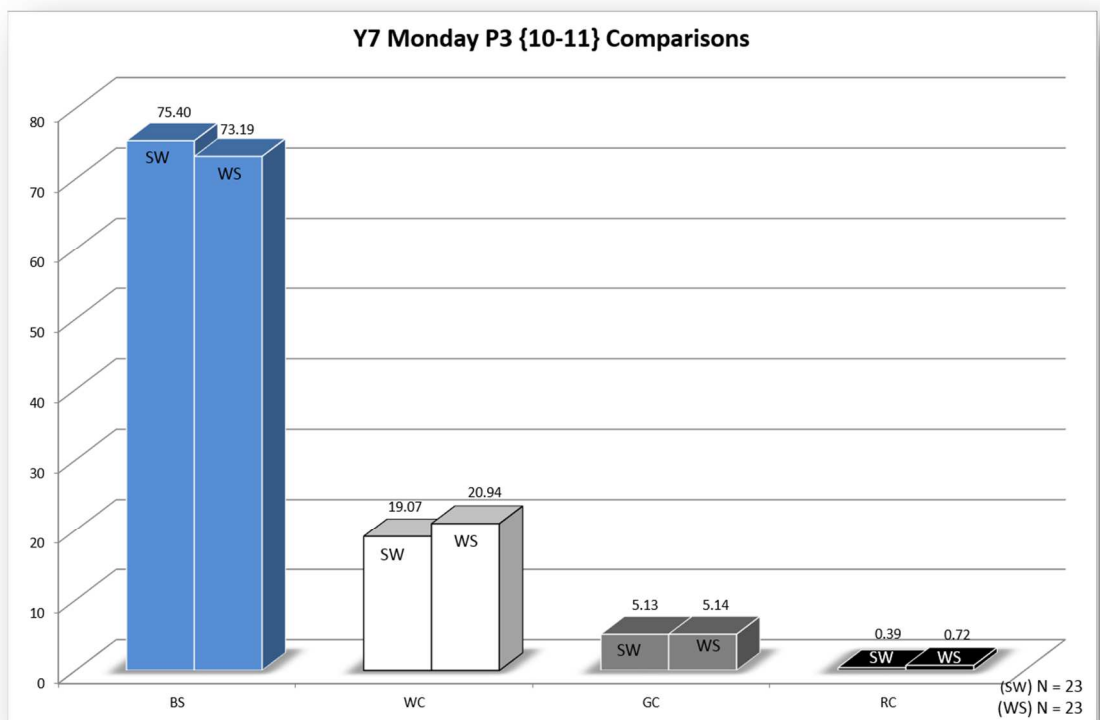
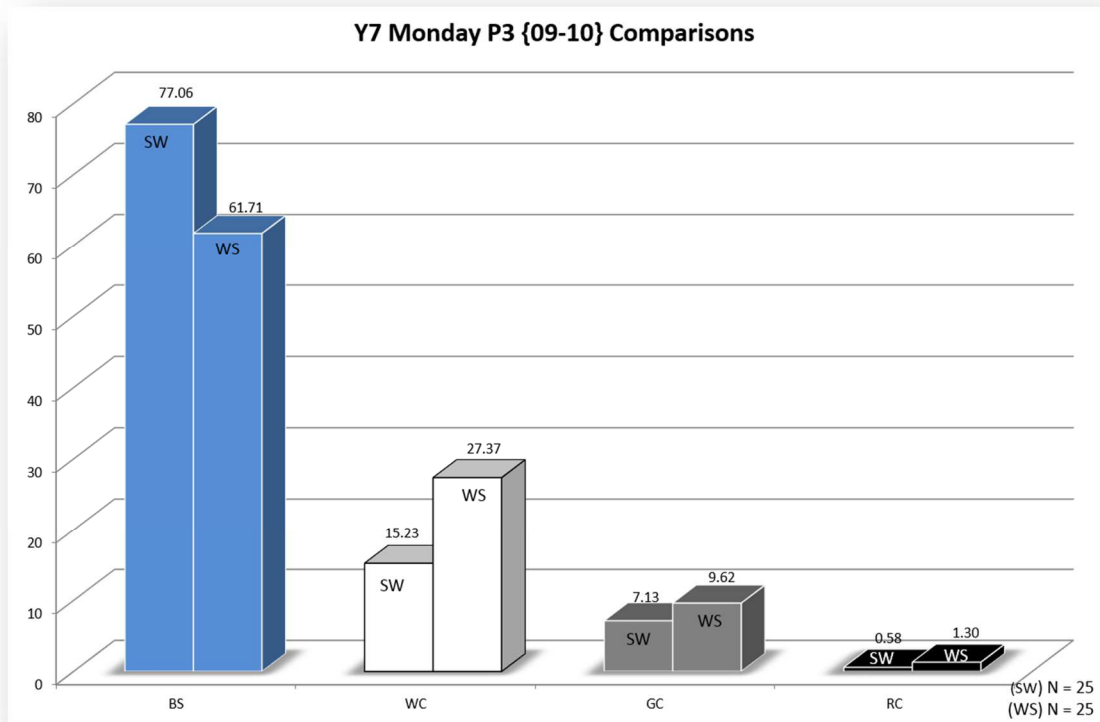
Year 9



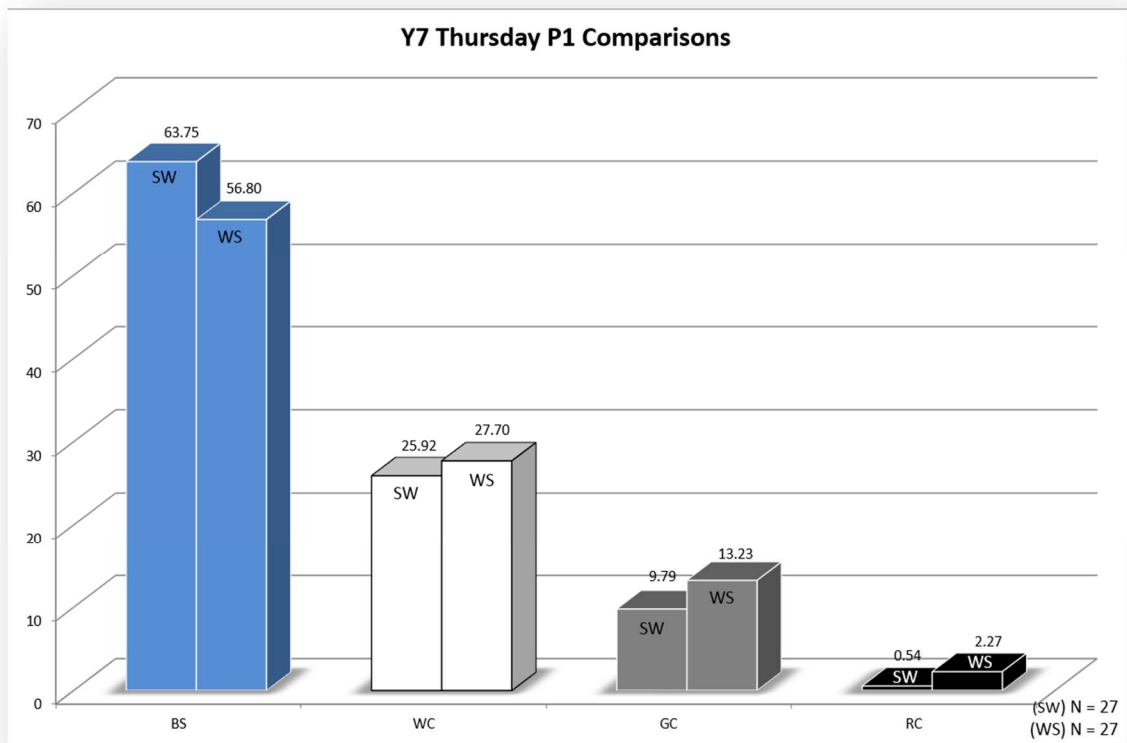
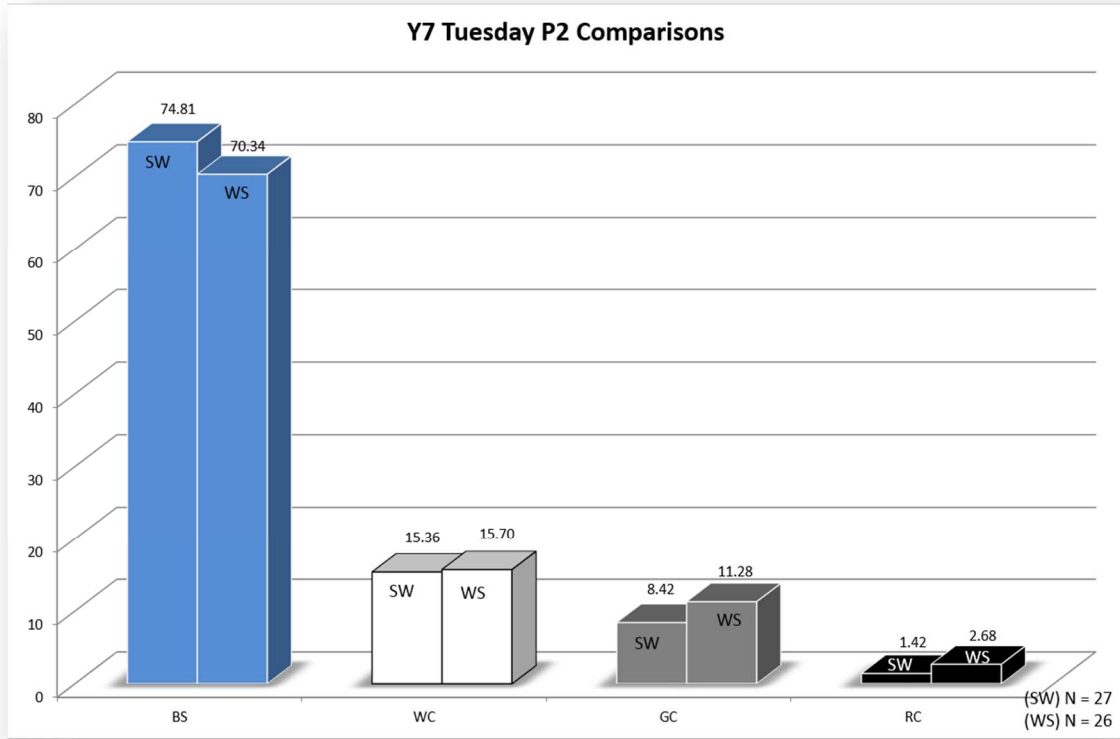
Year 10



**Weather: Individual class responses.**

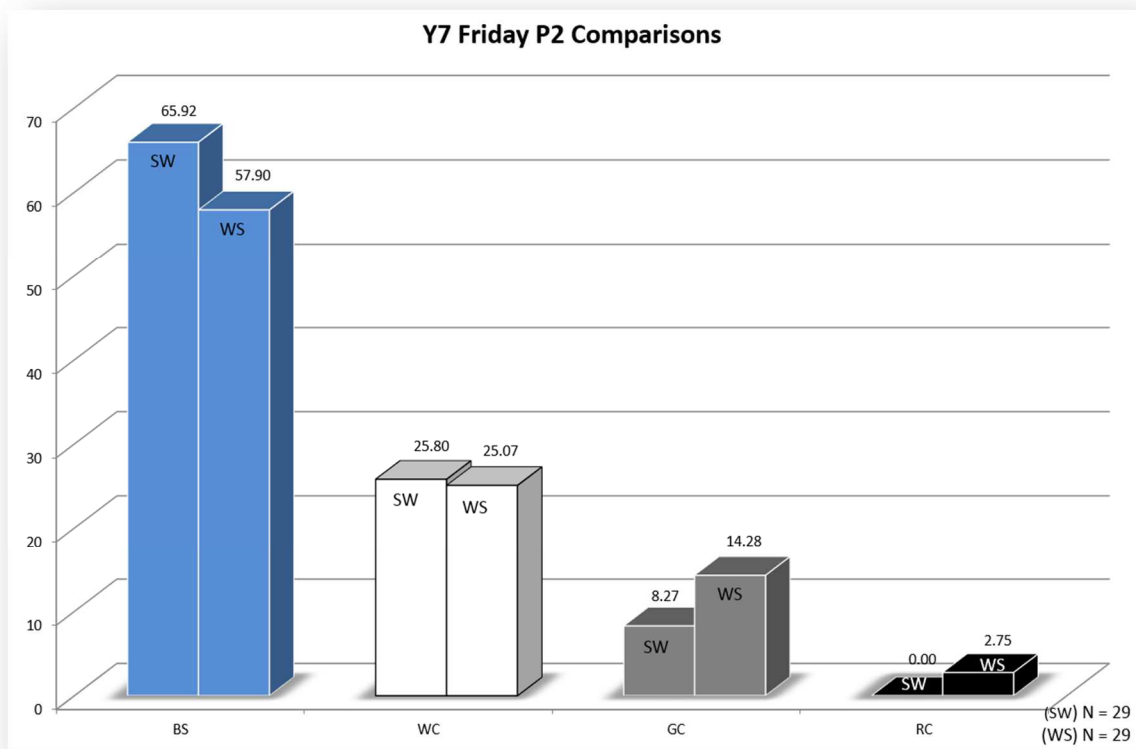
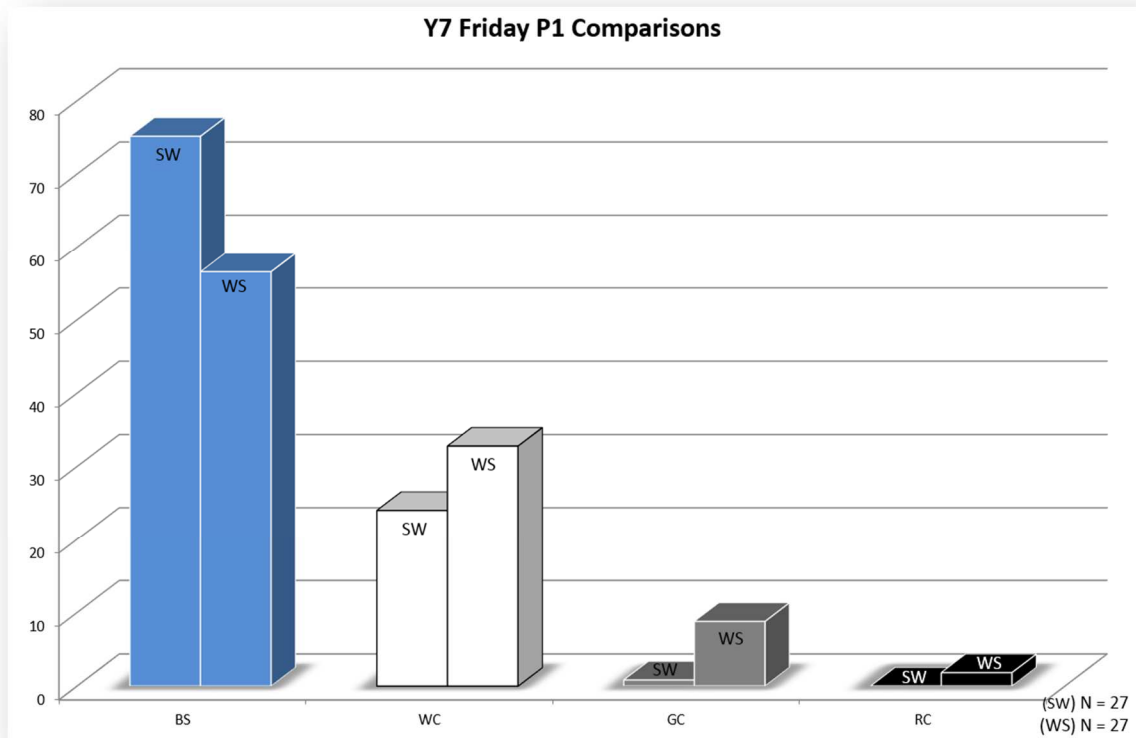


## Appendix 6M

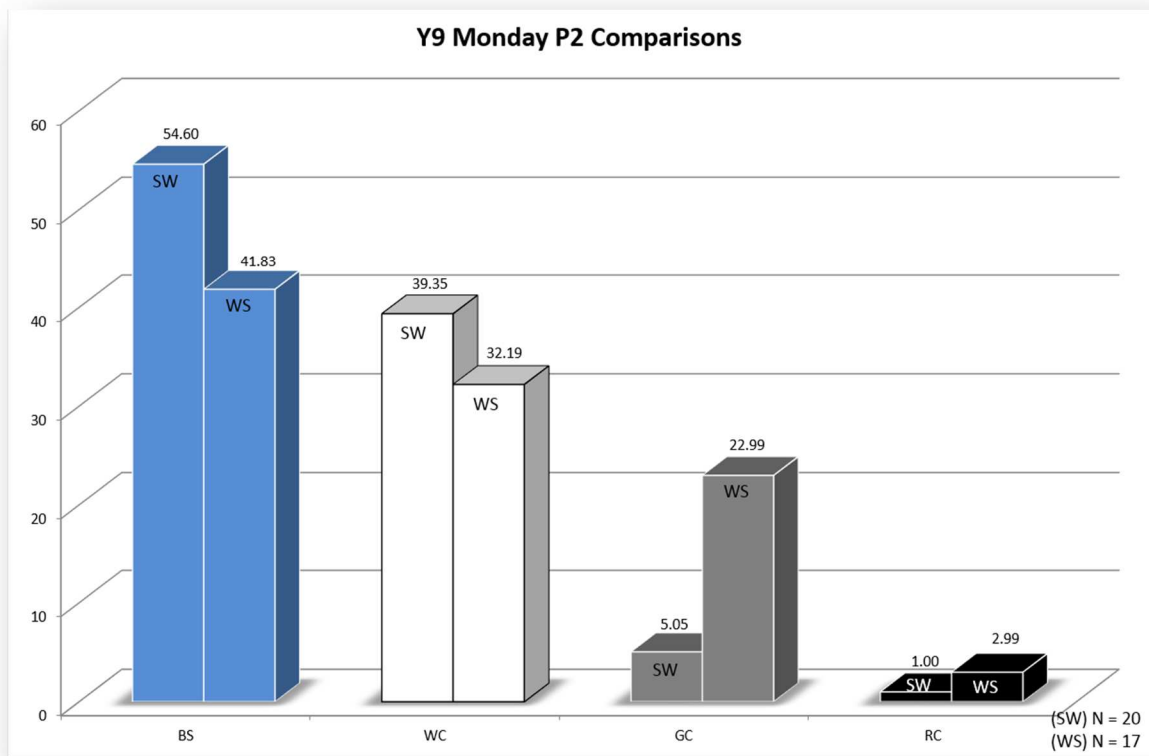
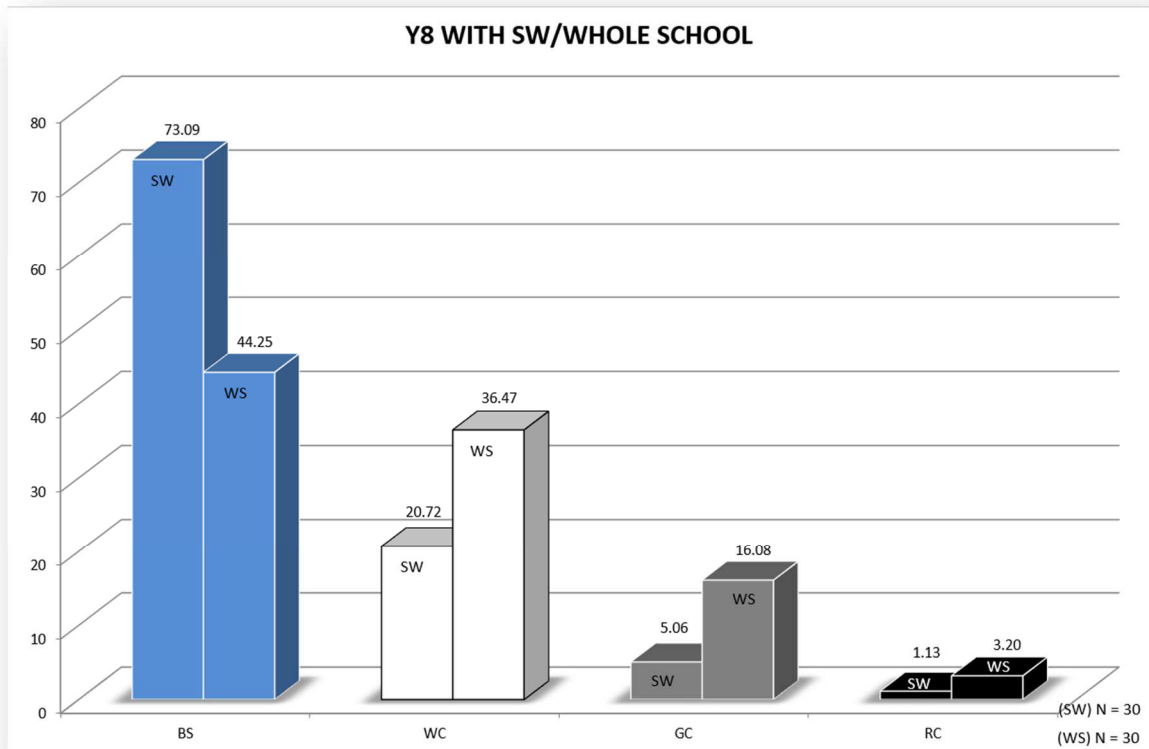




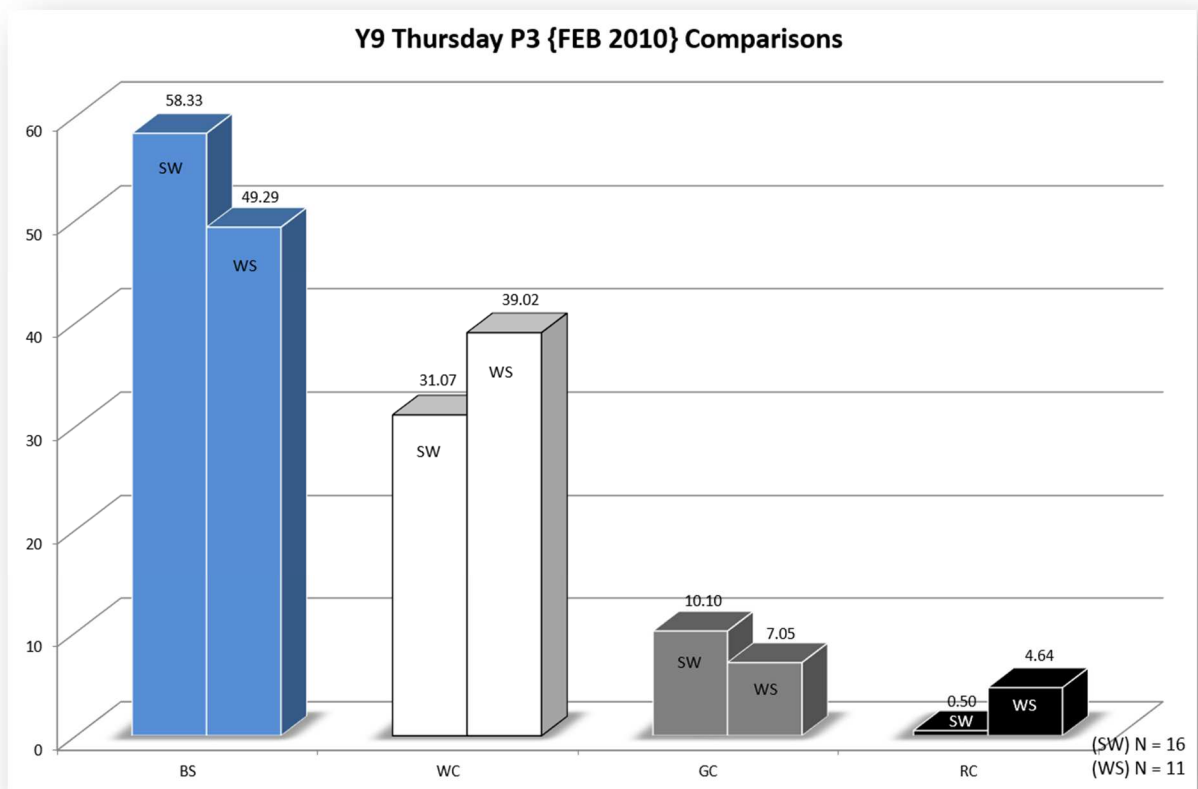
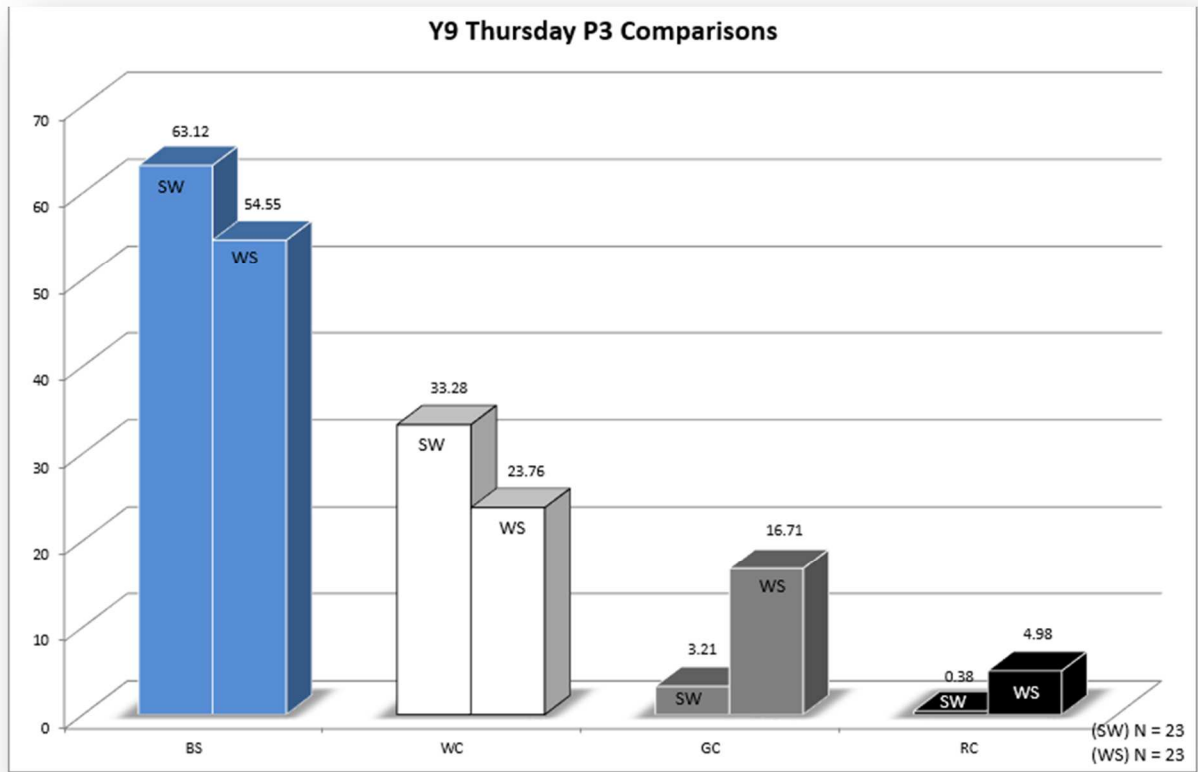
## Appendix 6M



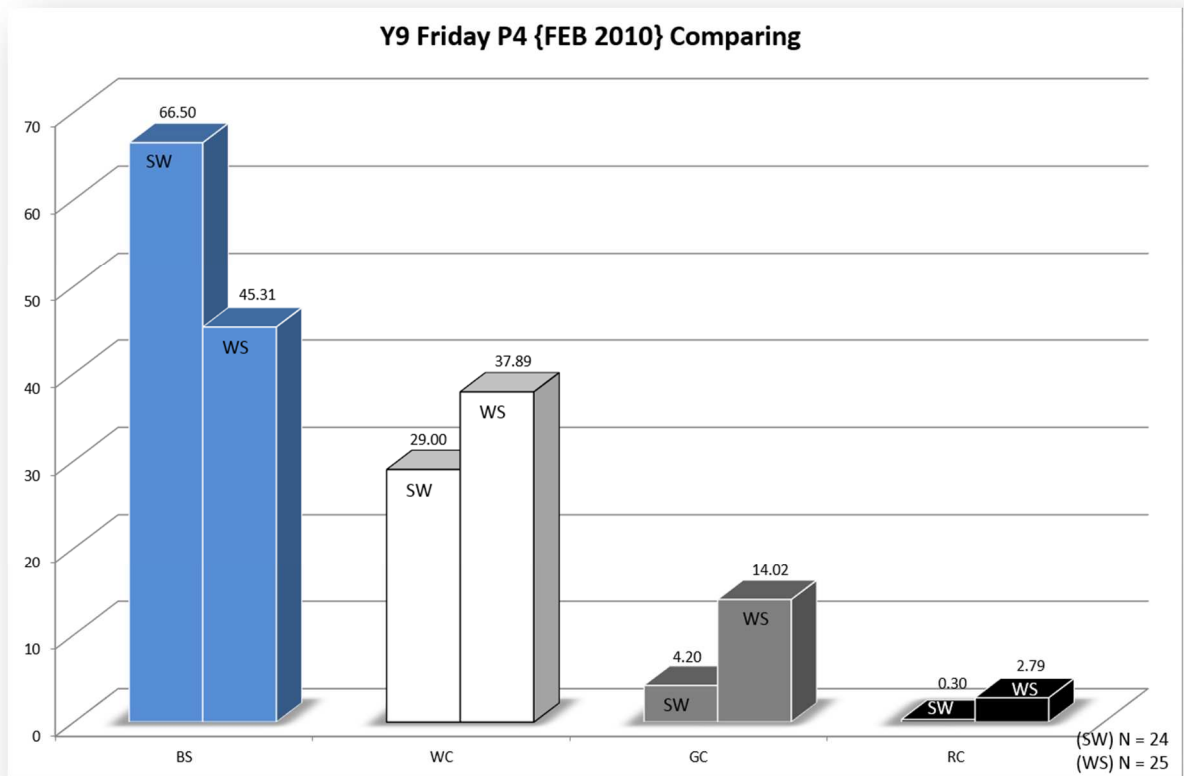
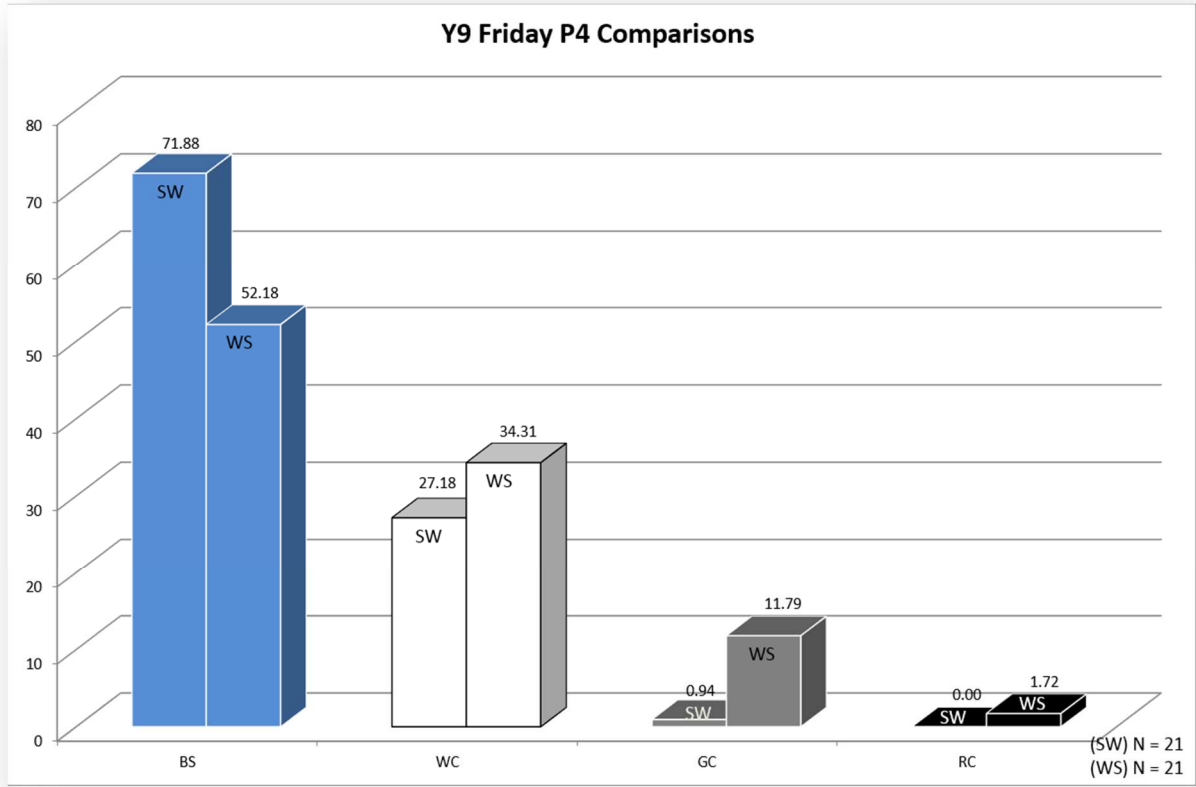
# Appendix 6M

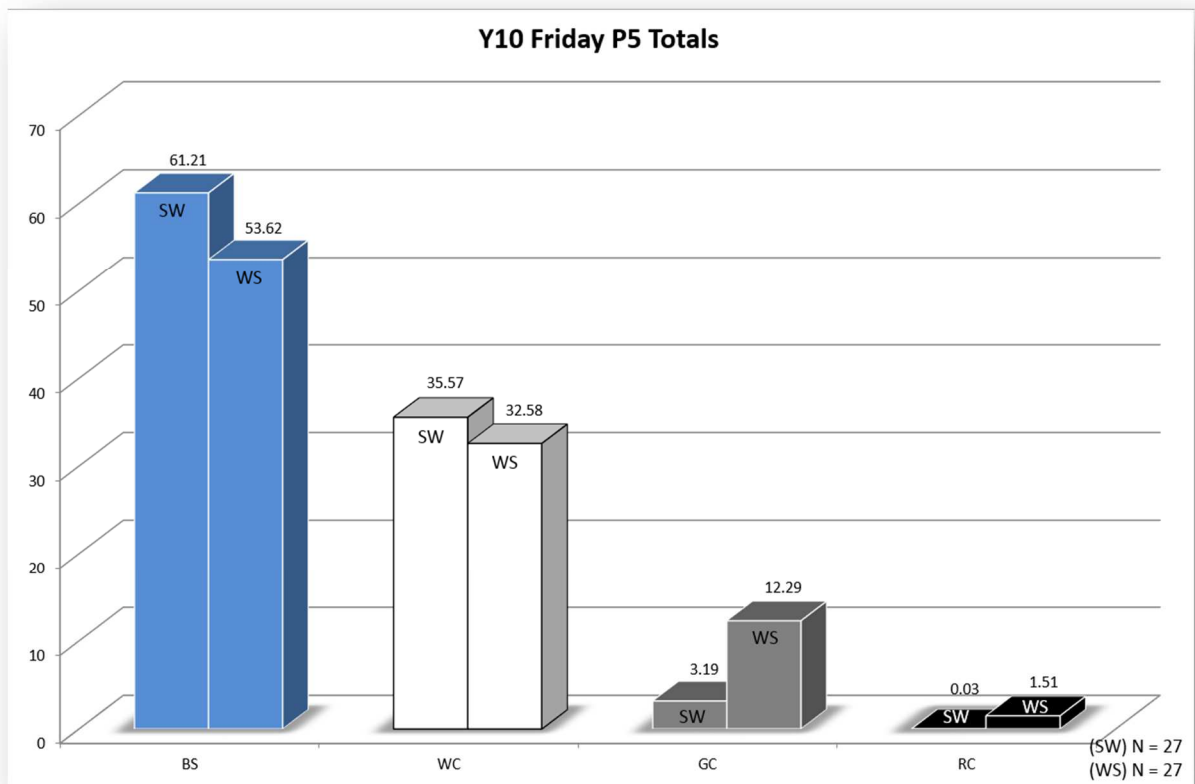
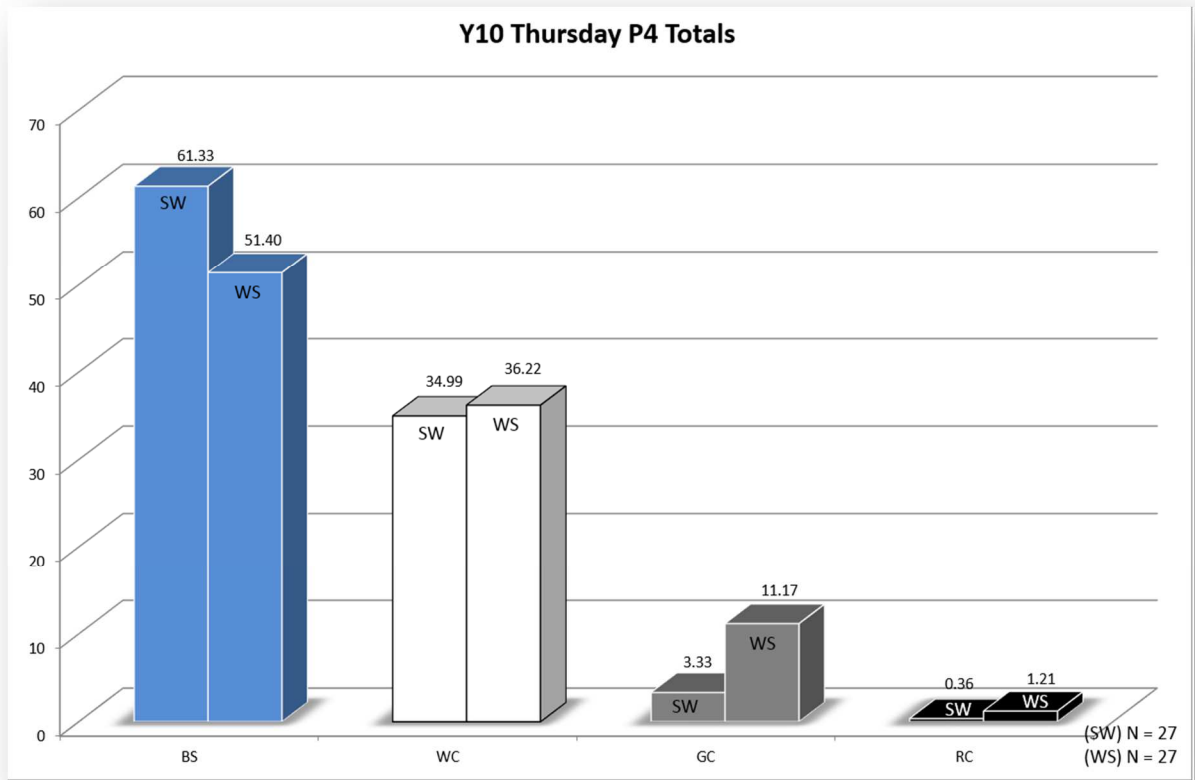


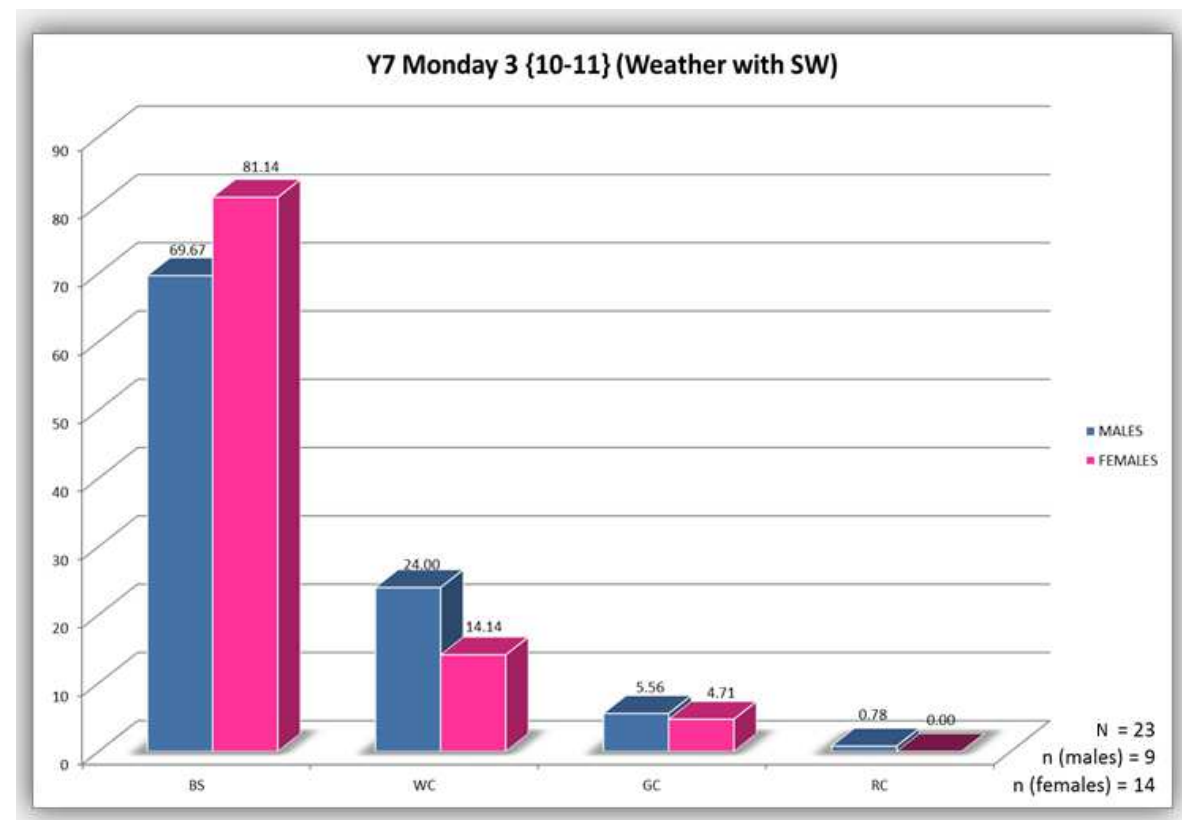
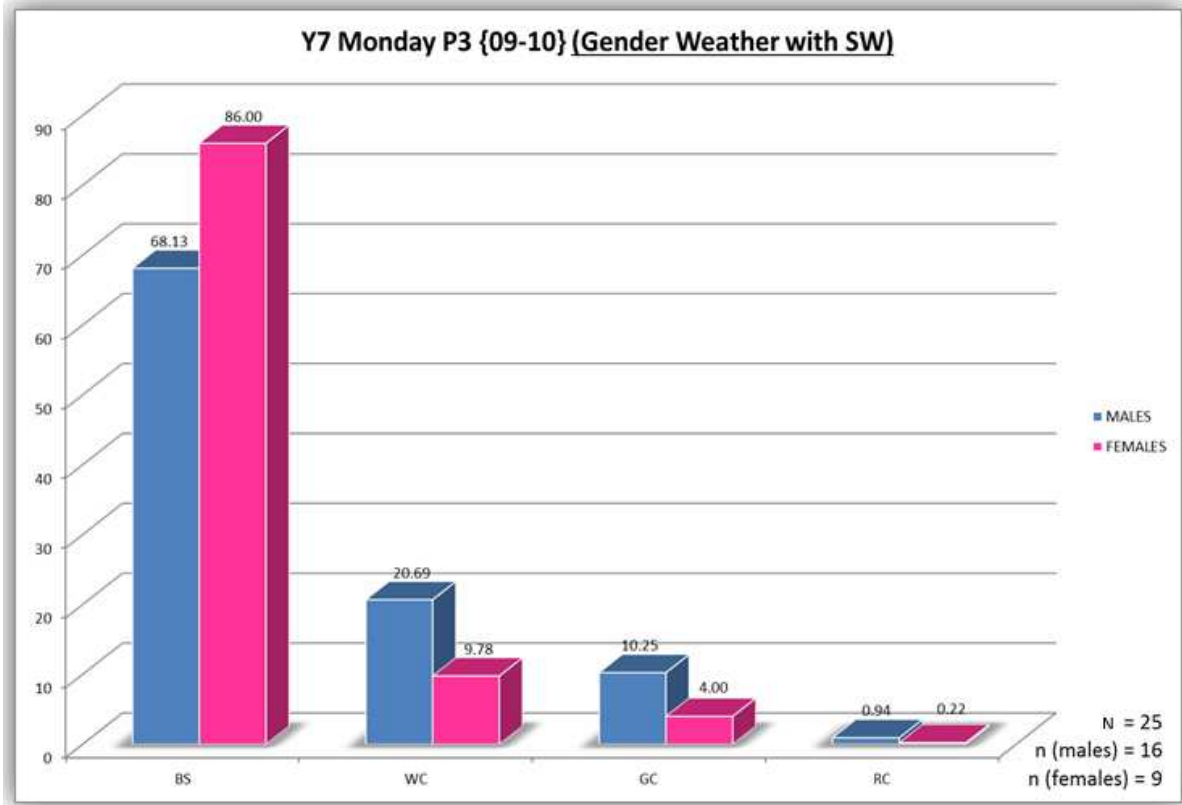
# Appendix 6M



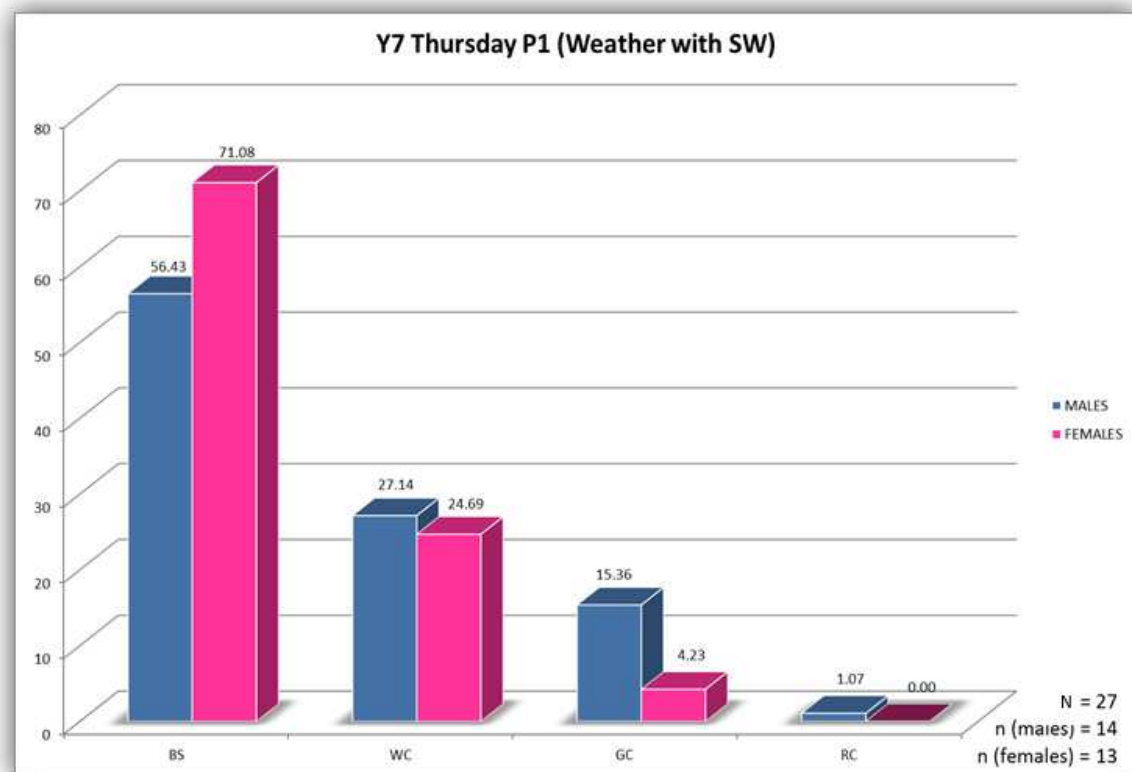
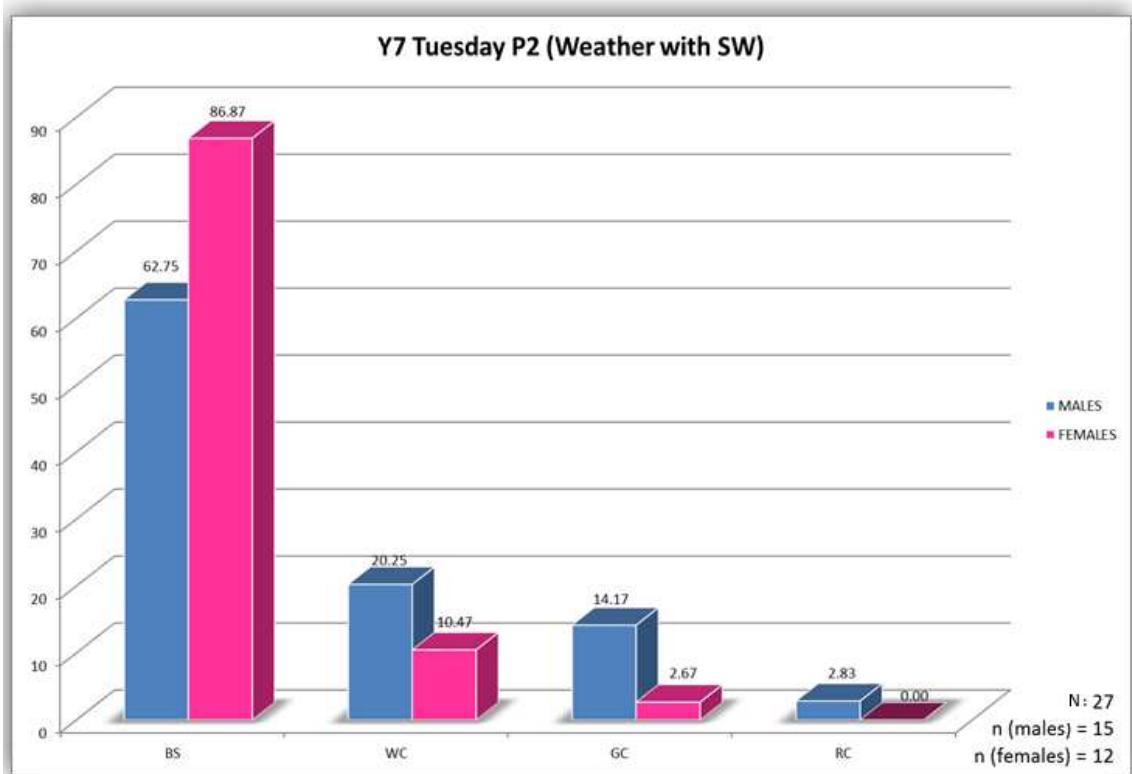
# Appendix 6M



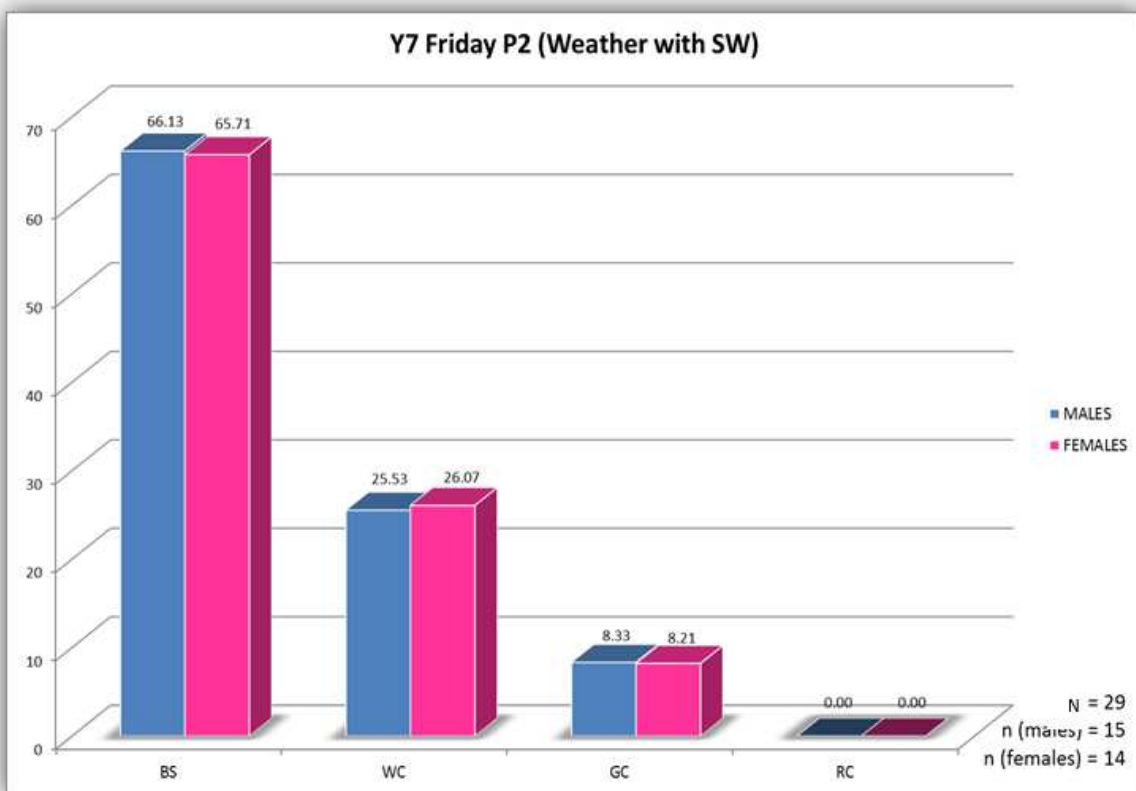
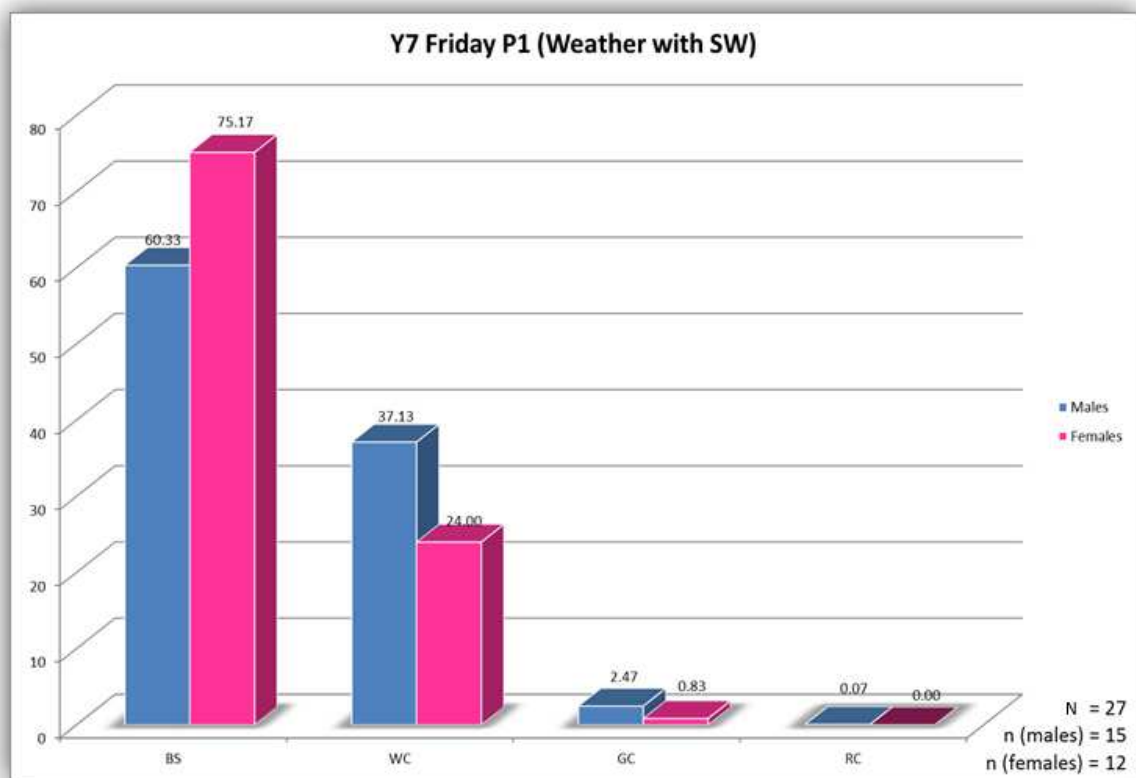


**Weather according to gender: Individual class responses.**

# Appendix 6N

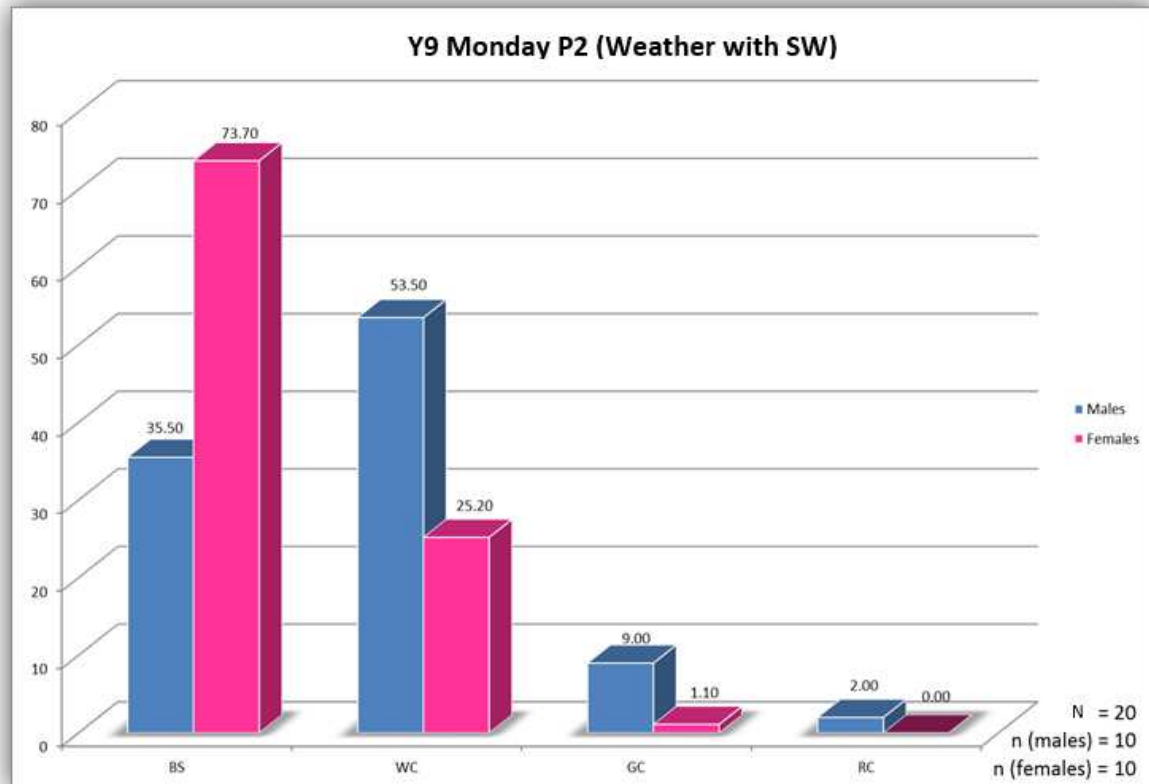
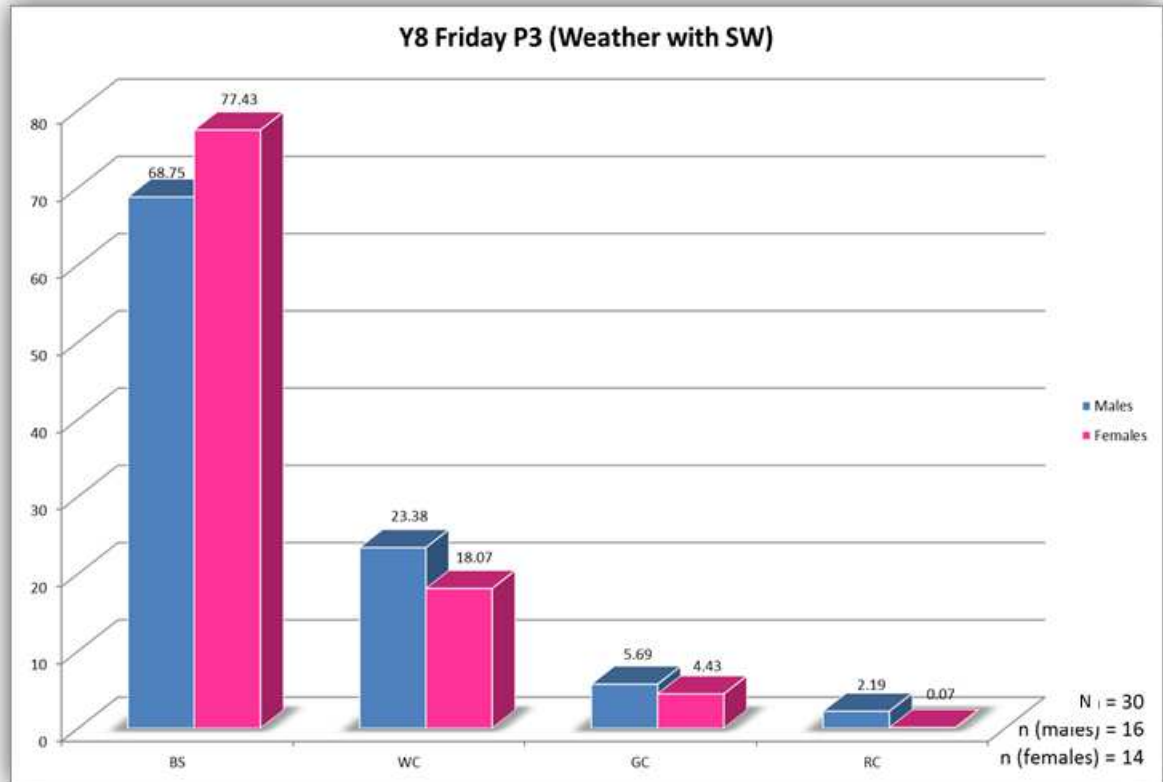


# Appendix 6N

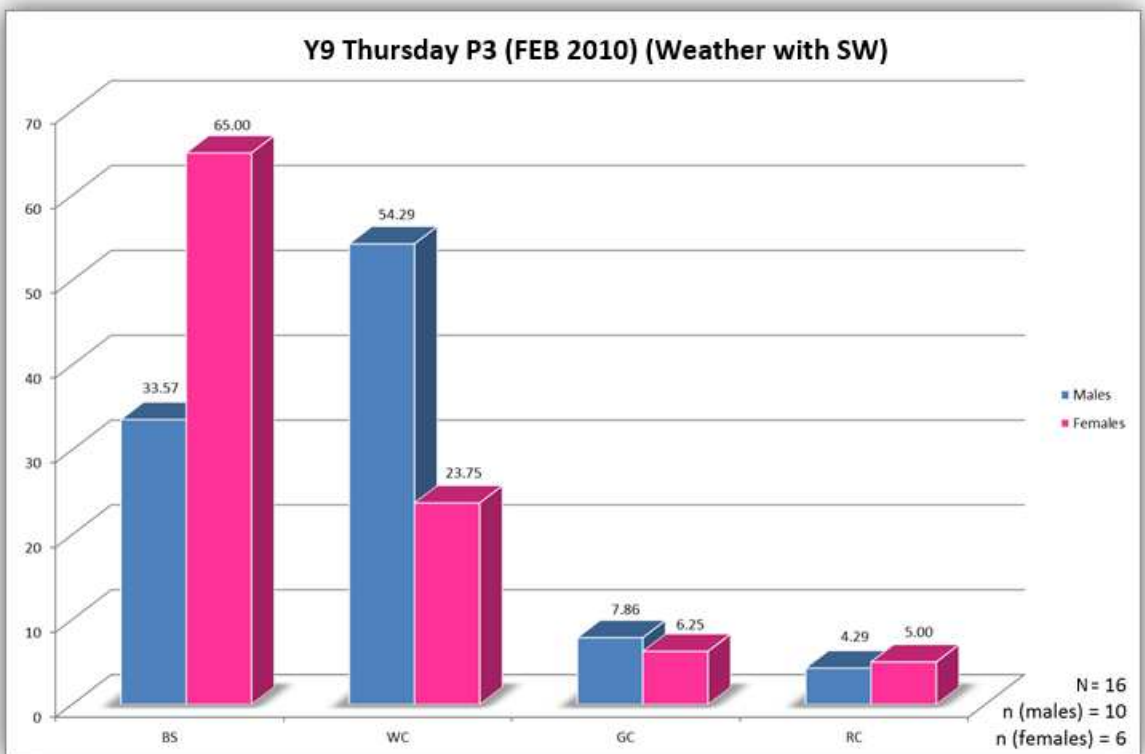
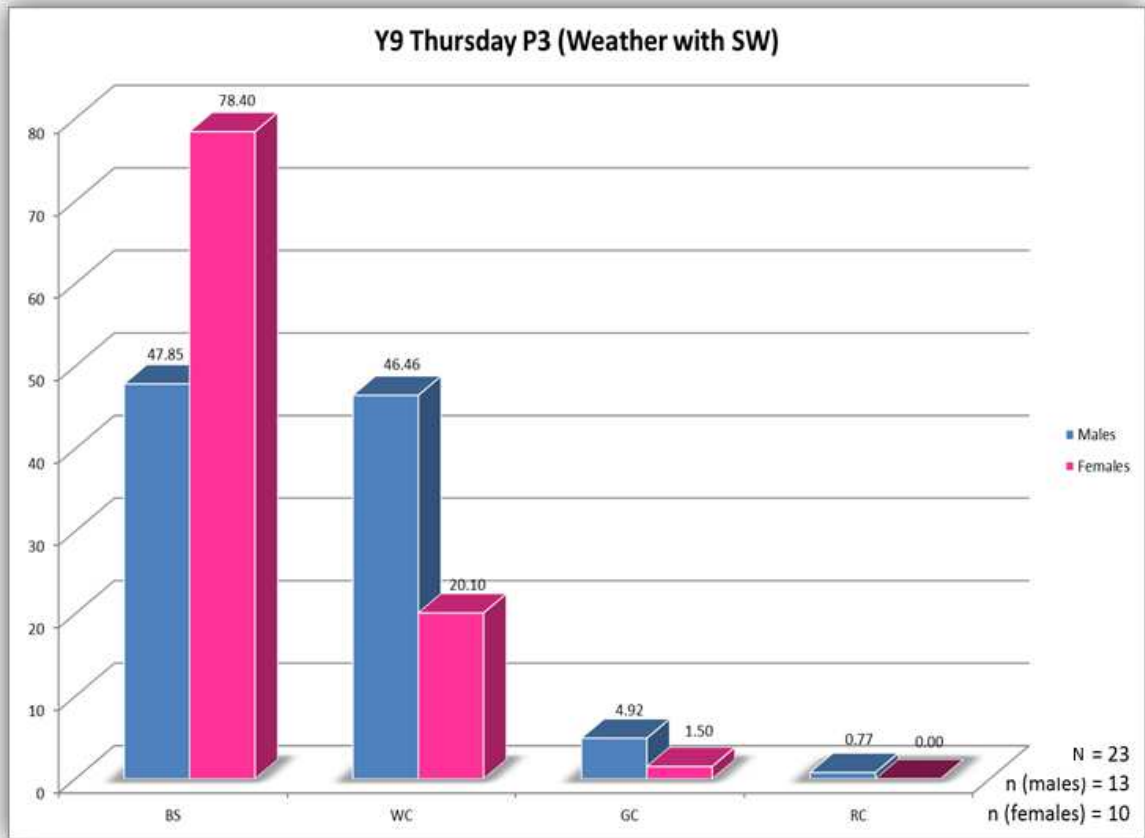




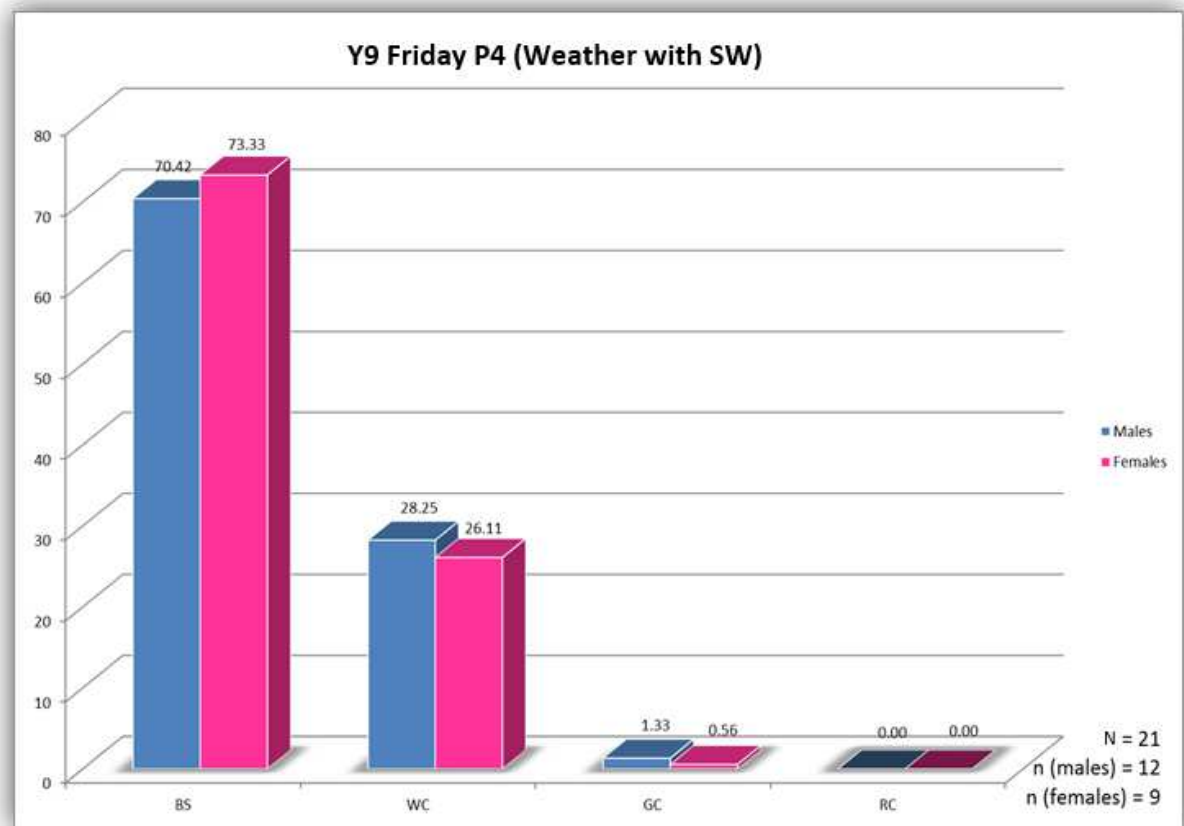
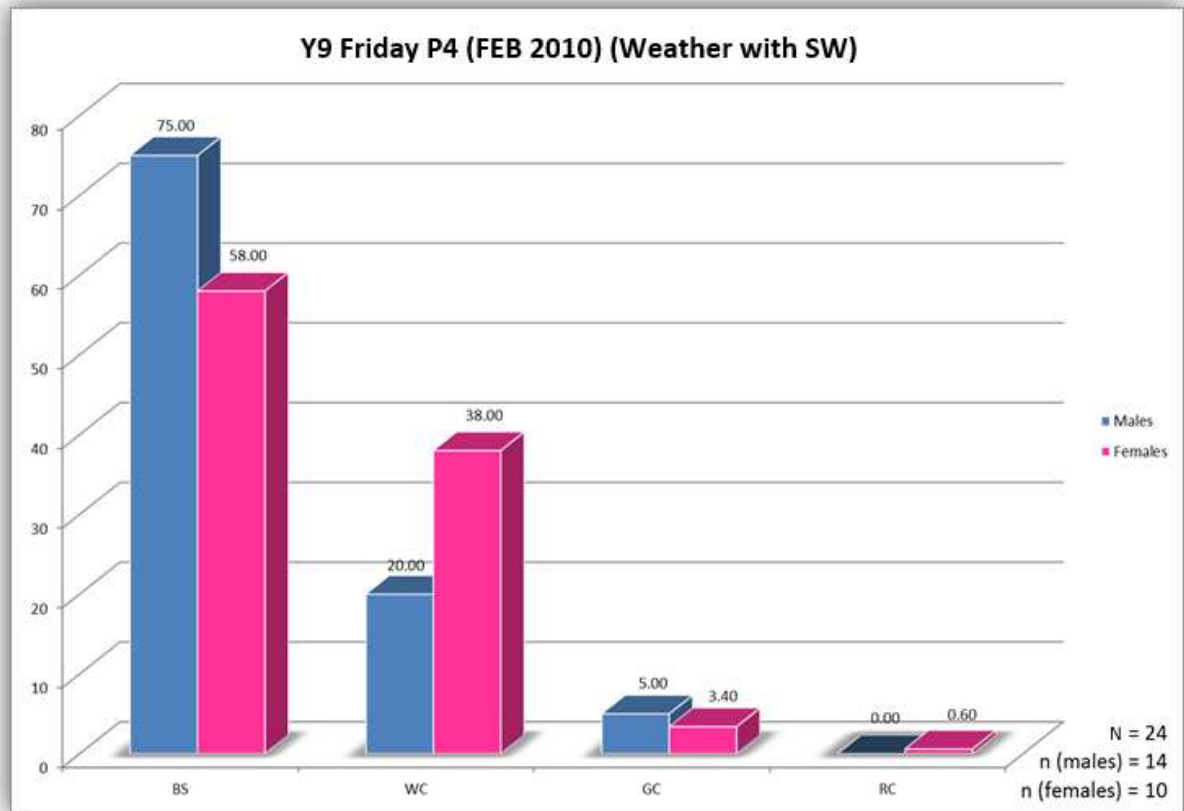
# Appendix 6N



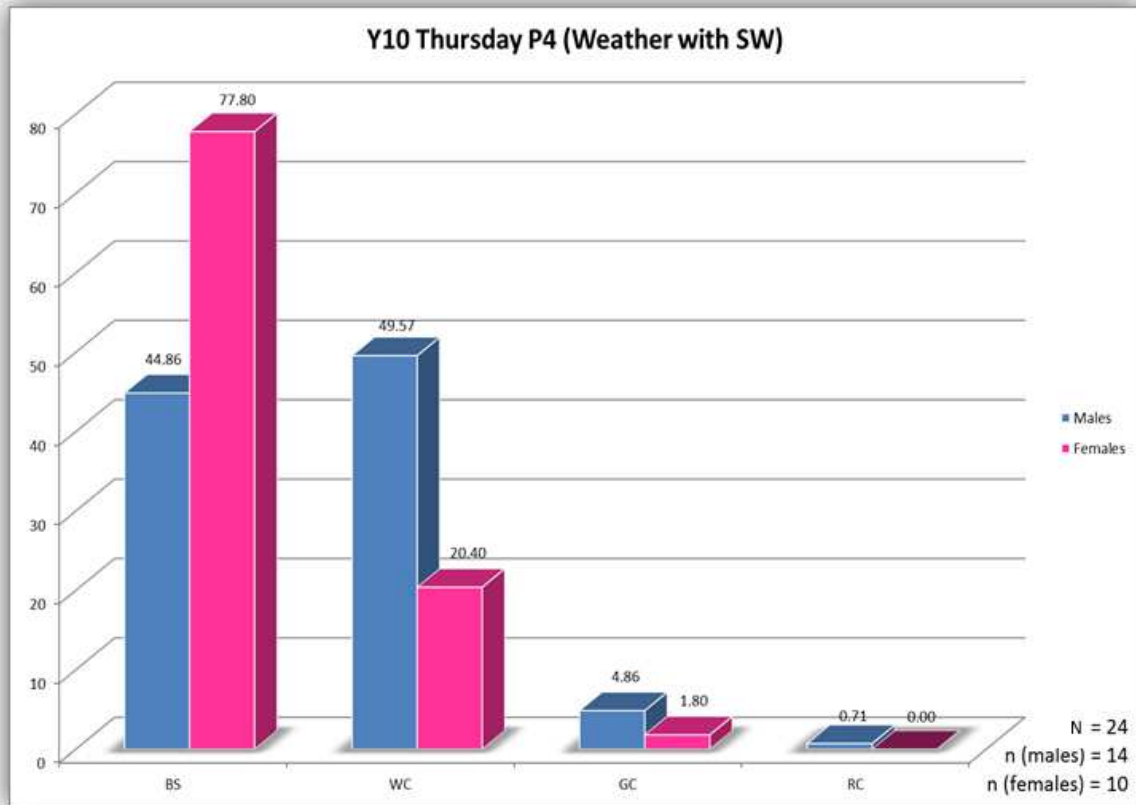
# Appendix 6N



# Appendix 6N



# Appendix 6N



# Appendix 7A

	O/S	Good	Satis	Devel needed	Comment
Classroom is well <b>organised</b> as a place of learning and displays enhance learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superb integration of resources.
Planning shows that learning objectives are <b>targeted according to ability</b> and are linked to success criteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher shows good subject knowledge and understanding which engages and <b>inspires</b> learners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The level of <b>challenge</b> for all learners remains constant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Opportunities to develop skills in <b>literacy/numeracy</b> are clearly developed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Through verbal & written responses - confidently delivered
Support staff and other resources provide <b>precisely targeted support</b> to enhance learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training to next learning forward was a key feature.
Behaviour is managed effectively so that no time is wasted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensitively & positively. Excellent planning.
Students are able to assess their own work and know in detail exactly what is required to reach the next level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competitive element inserted.
Learners enjoy their work and show a positive attitude and no time is wasted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff are acutely aware of student capabilities and of their <b>prior learning</b> and use this <b>relationship</b> to challenge them to learn and progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This is a key strength
Teachers systematically and effectively <b>check students' understanding</b> by using the success criteria throughout the lesson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff use a variety of teaching styles to promote effective independent learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superb & great fun!
<b>Marking</b> is diagnostic and linked to success criteria in order to target improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported by excellent verbal feedback.

**Judgement**

☒ Outstanding
 ☐ Good
 ☐ Satisfactory with good
 ☐ Unsatisfactory

☐ Good with outstanding
 ☐ Satisfactory

Observer: [Redacted] Date: 30/1/12

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Revised November 2011

*As a learner I would so look forward to this lesson!*  
*Thank you.*